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GLEANINGS

IN

ENGLAND.

ST. JAMES

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GLEANINGS

IN

ENGLAND;

DESCRIPTIVE OF
THE COUNTENANCE, MIND AND CHARACTER
OF THE COUNTRY.

By. MR. PRATT.

" I GLORY IN THE NAME OF BRITON."

VOL. IV.

LONDON:

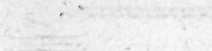
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GLASS

ADDITIONAL

BY GLASS



THE

BRITISH MUSEUM

AND

THE

NATURAL HISTORY

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MUSEUM



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE first Letter, and the last, of this Volume, furnish so much of what is usually considered to be necessary matter, in an address to the Reader, and so fully explain the Author's aim, and end—of both which, he trusts, the intermediate parts will, not unimpressively, supply the accomplishment—that not much is left, in the way of advertisement, to be added.

The Author's grand view, has been, what, indeed, will be but repetition to state here—though that part of the plan cannot be too soon known—to present a just and honourable IDEA of this important Country, as a whole, from—not a mechanical, not a methodical,—but fair and liberal survey of its parts, taken in several journies upon its animated surface, with descrip-

tions from immediate objects, and REFLECTIONS moral, natural, political, or personal; either in connection with, or arising out of them. And the motive which suggested this plan,—besides a compliance with the wishes of an amiable Foreigner, who, in a perusal of many contradictory accounts, was still at fault how to settle our pretensions in any of the above-mentioned particulars,—was, and is, a most ardent desire, to promote domestic peace and union! If the plan were executed but half as well, as the sentiment that gave it birth is sincere and commendable, the content of the Author's heart, which has been glowing even in the attempt, would indeed be absolute! At any rate, there never has been,—most likely there never shall be—a crisis, in the history of Great Britain, or of the Universe, when such an attempt, can more favourably be made, in point of time, than at the moment, in which, with a throbbing heart, he is now about to present it to his Correspondent abroad, and to his Countrymen at home.

If, to some, it should seem, that the Author has

been more desirous to exhibit the fair side of the British Portrait in this its leading OUTLINE,—if fewer of the shadings,—slight or deep,—are yet worked into the piece,—than those, who may love their Country, though affection blinds them not to its faulty features,—may conceive, should be given by a Painter professing to offer a faithful not flattering likeness,—they will patiently wait till at least another sitting. The Painter does profess to offer such a similitude, and he will keep his word, if health allows. Meanwhile, should that choicest blessing of Heaven to the inhabitants of the earth, be denied, and should this be the last time it may be permitted him to hold the pencil, he hesitates not, with great force of conviction upon his mind, to say, there will not be found a friend or foe, native or alien, in or out of the realm, who, after a candid,—he will not say uncandid, because malignity and envy can belie their own eyes and senses,—but, who, after a candid and HONEST inspection of what is here placed before them,—can say conscientiously—the resemblance

of this copy to the original, is not, as far as it goes, correct.

Of skill in the drawing, of delicacy in the tints, of fitness in the keeping, &c. &c. &c. the Painter has not a word to offer on his own account, though much, very much, indeed, on either of these points, where he has borrowed any of the colours, &c. from others; but for the resemblance, being, on the whole, exact, he should certainly meet criticism and even malice itself, at every possible point they might encounter him, did he not firmly believe, that their weapons, instead of fixing in the canvass of the Painter, or in the bosom of the Country, would recoil upon themselves.

In short, he has the fullest persuasion, that though this rough draft is set before the public eye in the best LIGHT, it is precisely in the place where TRUTH will allow PATRIOTISM to view it.

TO
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE EARL OF MOIRA.

MY LORD,

SENSIBLE of the value of your Name, and proud as I am of placing it before the following pages, I boast not of the PERMISSION. Upon this occasion, I certainly should have availed myself of what, I have always considered, ought to be the *privilege* of Men of Letters in every free Country, and of English Writers in particular—to select, and to appropriate, such Patrons as seem best calculated to adorn, to strengthen, or to illustrate, their subjects; *pre-supposing* them to be on the side of Virtue and Truth.

It was by one of those singular events, of which the heart ever after retains a pleased impression, that some of the subsequent Letters, then collecting for the press—fell under your Lordship's eye; but, had no such favourable circumstance taken place, their very nature, and design,—being to offer a friend upon the Continent, and all other foreigners a just idea of Great Britain—indeed, to give the very body and spirit of the time, its *immediate* “form and pressure”—would have made it absolutely necessary—if not in the beginning, certainly in progress of the correspondence, to add the *dignity*, the *weight*, and the *ornament* of the Earl of MOIRA's intellectuâl, military, and moral qualities to the many living examples already noticed, or yet to be mentioned, of the MIND AND CHARACTER OF THE COUNTRY: and *that*, not on the contracted measurement of temporary questions, or

local circumstances—not upon individual acquaintance or personal attachment—but, on the great scale of public and private virtue, which

“ Have bought

Golden opinions *from all sorts* of people.”

My Lord, on that basis, it would have been my duty to give every advantage to the execution of my plan, in regard to your Lordship, as well as other highly appreciated personages, of whom without soliciting or consulting any, it has been felt as a *justice due to my Country*, to write as I have written, under the auspices and sanction of Truth.

Indeed, the Sheets which happened to be placed in your Lordship's view, and which had the good fortune to satisfy your judgment while they interested your affections, did not, specifically, unfold to

you the particulars of the plan; it is, therefore, still on this basis I tender you the Work—but under every cheering hope your Lordship will find nothing in the Book to resist the Writer's claims, or to make you shrink from your own—a subject to which the Public will think I have by no means done full justice in this simple expression of them.

For my own part, I never could see clearly on what reasoning the maxim was founded that, *no Evil is to be spoken of the Dead*, any more than on what solid ground it could be argued that *no Good is to be written of the Living*; though I enter perfectly into the feeling which makes an ill report of either, one of the hardest duties imposed on a generous disposition. “A Book,”—says an Author I have had occasion to quote in the body of this Work—“which endeavours to eternize the memory

of truly great and noble Benefactors, to whom Works of consummate excellence, and acts of piety, charity, or public spirit, have deservedly given superior distinction in the age in which they lived,"—he might have said, or *are* living—"is a RECORD OF VIRTUE."

Accept then, my Lord, this preliminary Volume of English Gleanings,—receive it, I beseech you, as you will find I have all along requested the Friend to whom the materials which principally compose it, were originally sent,—as a FAMILY PICTURE—taken from the life, and shewn immediately after the first sitting—the outline sketched, the general figure exhibited, with here a particular lineament of boldness and strength, and there a trait of more softness—its harmonious proportions lightly touched, and an imperfect and rapid, but warm grouping of

the whole—And do not, I entreat you, let it be the subject of one moment's regret, that, as in the original, so in the copy, I thus casually mention a Nobleman as a first figure, which must *inevitably* stand extremely forward in the Piece, by whomsoever it may be painted.

I have the honour to be,

My LORD,

Your most obedient,

Humble Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

LONDON,

July 4, 1799.

C O N T E N T S.

LETTER I.

	PAGE
ARRANGEMENT of correspondence with the BARON DE B.—Difficulties of Gleaning ENGLAND explained, and adjusted—a preliminary compact	1

LETTER II.

Historical retrospect of the Island—Comparison, contrasts, and illustrations—the dominion of the Druids—the magic of the Bards—Portraits of Aboriginal Britons—Progress of their descendents—Shades in the several pictures—General modern character—Climate, and geographical division of the country . . .	10
--	----

LETTER III.

Of the proposed plan of excursion—Impediments—BROMLEY, in Kent—a poetical landscape taken there, in pencil—Sickness—Convalescence—Villa of Major JOHN SCOTT—Grave of HAWKESWORTH—SUMMER-TRIBUTE TO NATURE—Village of LEE—Monument	
---	--

	PAGE
of Lord DACRE—Conduct of his widow—Reflections on posthumous attachment—Modern etiquettes super- seding the feelings of Nature—Instanced by proxy- nurses and proxy-mourners—Epitaph on the late Countess of KERRY, by her husband—Remarks . . .	30

LETTER IV.

“We,” in England, “fly by night”—Sweep of an hundred miles into NORFOLK, betwixt afternoon tea and morning breakfast—The Author’s explanations as to his mode of travel—England’s pre-eminence in travelling—Luxuries—HORSES—CARRIAGES— ROADS—These compared with their contrasts in other countries—and formerly in our own—EPPING-Forest —AUDLEY-END—Earl of EGREMONT—Observations on the establishment of MAIL COACHES—the history of that institution—Garden villa of a friend—Birth- day verses	57
--	----

LETTER V.

ENGLISH INNS—their contrasts abroad—Dr. Johnson’s idea of an English tavern—The Gleaner’s opinion— Adroitness and penetration of English Waiters, as to the pretensions of a traveller—village of NORTH RUNCTON,—Scenery of that part of NORFOLK— County-Historians—Giants and Pigmies of the	
--	--

	PAGE
English Press—the Author's constant attachment to the living figure in preference to the dead letter—English agriculture — Gardening — Natural and artificial arrangements—Description of the county of Norfolk —English laws—Liberties—Bounties—Beatitudes . .	84

LETTER VI.

Unfoldings of Nature in the human mind—The portrait of a child—Opinions submitted, respecting innate ideas—Opening and progression of the fancy and the affections in children—The Gleaner's passing tribute to the shades of his Canary bird, and his ancient Steed—their defence, and his own former tribute—Farther remarks upon innate ideas, as to the preference and selections of some children to some particular objects of Taste—Delicacy—Choice—Sensation—as preceding Education—Discipline—or Imitation—Apostrophe to childhood—Offering from Pity to Innocence	168
---	-----

LETTER VII.

LYNN—its striking resemblance to several towns in France and Germany—the scenery around assimilates to that of Holland—illustrations—scraps of superstition—remains of Catholic Power and magnificence in England—present use of the ruins—a great event	
--	--

	PAGE
in the annals of Lynn—King John of England's sword!—also the history of a royal cup!—Flourish trumpets and drums!—Feast of Reconciliation!—The Author discourses with an ancient man—Commerce of Lynn—Idea of the general corn-trade of England, and energies of the country from a statement of the yearly average of the exports, from LYNN to foreign markets	132

LETTER VIII.

Infinite VARIETY of the English character—Proofs—General sameness in other countries—Manner and matter of the English character different—of other nations, much the same as to giving general images of minds and governments—a Dutch Treckschuyte, or Passage-boat, and English Stage-coach—Freedom of the British constitution produces the diversity—Reserve and coldness of the English character—a way offered by the Gleaner to thaw the Ice—The grand specific against this complaint only to be found in COURTESY, without a supply of which, no traveller should journey beyond the spot where he thinks he has a right to be disagreeable—namely, at home—in short, he has good-naturedly advised such a man to confine his UNTRAVELLING qualities to his own family—and only exercise his talents — on wife—sister—

	PAGE
daughter—servant—dog—cat, and other dependents	
—which would be comparatively generous	154

LETTER IX.

HILLINGTON—a new horse, sacred to ENGLISH Gleanings—his congenial character and qualities—Landscapes and objects in the way from Lynn to Hillington—an English heath compared with one of Germany—Waste ground of England—Spirit of enclosure—a national improvement—an estimate of the little great proud Island under its weight of debt, public war, private feuds, and with “all its imperfections on its head,” as it may be seen at this moment by the Author’s Correspondent, or any other foreigner—Mode of paying what will probably never be paid in any mode—Hillington-hall, and its present proprietor—Difficulty of acquiring on travel a knowledge of personal character—The Gleaner courteously offers the use of his key to the lock—Difference of the same person in the town-house, and at the country-seat—farther good effects of courtesy towards gaining the objects of every order of travellers—the shrewd truths and sheer-mother wit of the common country people of England, if left to express their feelings and opinions in their own way—illustrations—the wonderful consequence of the chief personage of a village, as to morals and happiness of the vil-

	PAGE
lagers—Mr. POLWHELE's Remarks remarked on—both sides of the Country Gentleman's picture—the heart of the Reader perchance will here chill and glow— The Gleaner leaves a blessing as he passes the scenery of Hillington—the distinction betwixt popularity and virtue—a scale of illustrious names, and their estimate ascertained—the wonderous magic of the two monosyllables, my OWN, so far as regards the AFFECTIONS ; for as to any thing else, a good-natured man feels that he has property in all that gives happi- ness to human beings	164

LETTER X.

HOUGHTON—the WALPOLES—the shew-ladies and gentlemen at all the fine *places*, as they are called, of England—Grand keepers of the household lions—Portrait and epitaph—a yet more durable portrait of Catherine, second wife to the celebrated Sir Robert—the first impression on the mind of classic travellers in visiting the mansions of illustrious men—illustrations—Sir Robert and Horace Walpole—Houghton Hall—Park—Woods—Church—The mansions of the living and the dead—Another proof of the native acuteness of the unlettered classes of the people of England, and their power of giving the TRUTH OF CHARACTER, if you get them into train—further instanced in a right learned Clerke, yclept Jarvis—

CONTENTS.

XXI.

	PAGE
the historian of Houghton—his masters—neighbours and himself—Lord George ORFORD	197

LETTER XI.

The Gleaner's respect for his Correspondent and Readers —The graves of the great—the meditations of a servant over the ashes of his master—a portrait of Simplicity in sorrow—the Reader will not be un- moved—Monumental lines, left by the Gleaner in Houghton-Park church	222
---	-----

LETTER XII.

The Right Learned Clerke exhibits himself as a Critic on the foregoing verses—means to make a very elo- quent speech on delivering them to the higher powers —but is prevented by persons in office from making any speech at all—Alas, poor Verses!—and, alas, poor learned Clerke's speech as intended to be spoken!—PRINCE OF WALES's birth-day, and the day preceding harvest—LORD AND LADY CHOLMONDELEY —a village festival—Drink, Dance, and Song—an HARVEST-DAY, and the Author Gleaneth it—a brief survey of England—illustrations—MALLET DU PAN —the animated translation of his "Mercure Britan- nique," and remarks upon translators in general . . .	230
--	-----

LETTER XIII.

An interesting evening—The effect of moonlight on the fancy, and the heart—The world assumes an entire new face under the power of her beams, as if it were rather another world than the same twin-worlds, similar in fashion, exact in features, different almost to contrast in expression, and character of countenance—L'Allegro and il Penseroso of Nature displayed in her Day and Night—A second visit to Houghton-Hall, in the pensile hour, and alone—Reflections made on Prime Ministers and Poets, in the very witching time of night—Castle of Otranto, and an appearance 254

LETTER XIV.

Anecdotes, agricultural, and bountiful, of Lord George Orford—his character by Arthur Young—by the villagers—by the county—as supplementary to the histories of the learned Clerke—Houghton village—A village man—The hearts of the villagers' huzza—The Author joins—his Correspondent, and his Readers will not refuse to join in the chorus 263

LETTER XV.

Road-side between HOUGHTON and FAKENHAM, and EAST RUDHAM—History of the old Man of the gate—

	PAGE
A more extensively comparative view of England with other countries—A sun-bright passage from a resplendent living writer—the author of the “Pursuits of Literature”—his description of a true poet—the description justly personified in the author of it—Return of Mr. SHERIDAN to the English drama—Literary character of that writer—Kotzebue—the Gleaner promiseth his Correspondent to consider on some future day the present state of ENGLISH LITERATURE, in order to ascertain the intellectual character of the country—Apostrophe to LAVATER and ZIMMERMAN! with an account of the pettifoggers of the English Press	273

LETTER XVI.

FAKENHAM—The CRITICISM OF ENGLISH LITERATURE considered—Observations on the dignity of the Art—Bishop Hall’s character of Satire—and a character of Bishop Hall—Private tutors of olden times—Private tutors of the present day contrasted—Old English words, like manners, require interpretations, not to be found in Johnson—Examples—of the lower orders of English Biographers—Literary cavillers—Of the higher orders—The importance, and the difficulty of the office of a public critic—its uses—its abuses—Tribute of truth—The hard situation of the genuine pro-

	PAGE
professional critic—made responsible for errors not his own—Errors and cowardice of readers—Illustration—The affair betwixt critic and author, argued on a principle of equity—Spirit of perfectability—Reflections thereupon	296

LETTER XVII.

Description of FAKENHAM—RAINHAM-HALL—MARQUIS TOWNSEND—The fair historian of Fakenham—The Rule of Three, being verses made on the road for the occasion, and containing a piece of very general information, very useful to be known by all who travel into England—HOLKHAM—Mr. COKE—Characteristical sketches taken under a gate-way, during a shower of rain—A nameless character, said to breathe some where in the county of Norfolk—The Author's objection to fine sights, fine houses, fine gardens, and fine people, upon <i>paper</i> —His reasons—A simple fact that consecrates brick and mortar, and would render holy a mud cottage—Barham-Abbey—Mrs. Dennis—The charm of urbanity—The Parent of the Courtesy, which the Gleaner so recommendeth—Travellers usually make the reception they find—Modern improvements upon ancient reliques—Illustrations—Improvements—Cells of despotic monks turn'd into pig-sties, &c. &c.—Armorial bearings—MELTON Constable	334
--	-----

LETTER XIX.

PAGE

WALSINGHAM—The country lifts itself up, yet shews, alas! its nakedness—accounted for, by the relation of an INCREDIBLE truth—but as it will call for vouchers—were the Gleaner put on his trial to prove his assertion, he should subpoena the county of Norfolk—amongst others, Mr. *****—the party most concerned—who might, indeed, be a principal evidence both for and against himself—A truly good man wronged, and encouraging his wrongers—Singular, authentic anecdotes—A good old English dwelling-house—A good old English heart, and its hospitalities—but such *new* customs as were, probably, never heard of since the beginning of time—Displays of a very tender disposition, and of a fine understanding, in despite of the axe and the hatchet—A new character in an old world—The Author is admitted to a midnight breakfast—a three o'clock in the morning dinner, and to what is better than either, a pleasant conversation that atoned even for the loss of a night's rest! 363

LETTER XX.

The strange, perhaps, unheard of, circumstances mentioned in the foregoing Letter, attempted to be accounted for, upon principles of tender-heartedness—

Marvellous anecdotes of our august Lady of Walsingham, erst the competitor, for, at least, equality of homage, of the Lady of Loretto—List of her Royal pilgrims, and several on their Royal bare feet, particularly our 8th Henry, of pious memory, and his Queen Catherine—the former of whom, after his worshipping fit was over, grew tired of his idol, according to custom, and threw her into the flames—The Walsingham wishing wells, where the Gleaner wisheth—Ride to STIFKEY—The interesting beauties of BAYFIELD, the seat of Mr. JODDRIL—Pictures for painting—The beauties and blemishes of LETHERINGSET—The state of Methodism in England—good and sincere in the principle, gloomy and fatal in the effect—Illustrations 396

LETTER XXI.

HOLT—The Gleaner meeteth with some Fellow-Labourers, and entereth with them into pleasant discourse, and, after some merry chat, leaveth them a great deal happier than he ever expecteth to be himself, and he much feareth the great majority of his Readers, unless they can contrive to bring back the days when their tears “were forgot as soon as shed”—Villages of Upper and Lower Shellingham—Glorious uncertainty of property in England, for near two cen-

	PAGE
turies, in which historians, and even proprietors, or supposed proprietors are at fault—Estimate of the loss sustained by Europe, by means of the French Republic, in money, goods, and territory—A picture of fallen States, serving as a warning to States which yet exist—An Athenian record brought <i>home</i> in its application to the immediate history of a particular part of Modern Europe	435

LETTER XXII.

CROMER—Beeston Priory—Cromer Beach—Views of the ocean in different parts of the day and evening—The Author gleaneth the SEA—also the five late victories upon it—A prospect of the Naval Glory of England—borrows some golden ears from living English Bards, to make his sheaf-offering presented to England's heroes more worthy their acceptance 453

LETTER XXIII.

Farther remarks on CROMER—its accommodations—its comforts compared with prouder ports, where fashion drives comfort into recesses like Cromer—the latter very favourable to old spinster and bachelor travellers—Excursions—FELBRIGG, GUNTON, SISTED, WALSFORD, CLEY—Delightful excursions from CROMER;

	PAGE
various and beautiful in every direction of the country, and at pleasant distances for either rides or walks—Felbrigg, Sisted, Gunton, Alborough, Antingham, North Walsford, Cley—Anecdote of the Harbord estates—Lord SUFFIELD and his family—Mr. Secretary WINDHAM's plantations—The English spirit of improving the waste lands more particularly explained—Messrs. KENT and VANCOVER's estimates of the benefit of enclosure—The Gleaner's opinion on that subject—Return to picturesque beauty—GUNTON-HALL—Overstock of game—an imputed nuisance to the neighbourhood—Inquiry into an adjustment of this matter—A Landscape—a Seascape—Beachlines	489

LETTER XXIV.

Entrance of an old correspondent and acceptable contributor—Offering of a new sheaf from him—The Gleaner sporteth on some external formalities in the *liberal* professions—Gleaning of IRELAND, so far as relates to the late unhappy divisions in that Kingdom—Brief survey of causes and effects—Contrasts between the yeomanry and peasantry of the two Countries—State of the poor—of the Papists and Protestants—acute and appropriate observations on each—Irish cabins, and potatoe grounds contrasted to

	PAGE
the cottage and cottage gardens of England—Poverty of the lower classes accounted for—The probable good to be effected, as to commerce and manufactories by an Union with England—Farther causes of general extreme indigence amongst the poor—Summary view of what has been stated on the great question of the UNION in the Parliaments of Great Britain and Ireland—Rise and progress of the disorders of the latter Country—Crimes and cruelties—Conclusive observations as to the pain attendant on the excursions and surveys of the Gleaner of Ireland, compared with the heart-felt pleasures of the English Gleaner	526

LETTER XXV.

Military state of England at the present moment—The ARMOUR OF PATRIOTISM put on by every man to resist invasion—The progress of a national sentiment—The car of the Hero, and the waggon of the Husbandman—The delights of Peace, and the horrors of War contrasted—Remarks on a grand National Army collected by, and composed of, men of property—A House determined to UNITE cannot fall	560
---	-----

GENERAL POSTSCRIPT.

Motives for bringing this correspondence to a pause at the present moment—Future subjects—Author's ad- dress to his Friend, and to the Public—A trophy sacred to the Unhappy	582
---	-----



*** THE PROPRIETORS deem it necessary to inform the Public, That this Volume, though marked the FOURTH of Mr. Pratt's *Gleanings*, is but the *Preliminary Volume* of GLEANINGS IN ENGLAND; and, notwithstanding its being a *separate* and *independent* Work, such of those Purchasers of the former Volumes who wish for uniformity and numerical succession in binding and lettering, will be thereby accommodated.

Lately Published in Three Volumes,
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HUMANITY:

Or, THE RIGHTS of NATURE: A POEM.

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By MR. PRATT.

Also,

A New and Improved Edition of

FAMILY SECRETS,

By the same AUTHOR.

ERRATA.

- Page 23, l. 13, add *and* after *expect*.
... 58, l. 14, for *Persian*, read *Prussian*.
... 59, l. 1, n. after *countrymen*, add *says*.
... 84, l. 7, for *distinguishes*, read *distinguish*.
... 93, l. 23, for *walk*, read *path*.
... 108, l. 8, for *glorious*, read *glories of* vegetation.
... 112, l. 15, for *have*, read *has been*.
... 154, l. 16, for *petite*, read *petit*.
... 160, l. 4, for *there*, read *these*.
... 176, l. 24, for *shop to shop*, read *street to street*.
... 198, l. 8, for *free*, read *tree*.
... 240, l. 8, for *their lord*, read *their old lord*.
... 326, l. 4, after *friend*, add *yet*.
... l. 12, for *and wishes*, read *would wish*.
... 428, l. 3, for *and*, read *till* reprobations.
... 429, l. 20, after *but*, add *it* partakes.
... 461, l. 15, for *For*, read *Far* beyond.
... 511, l. 18, for *they are*, read *it is*.
... 520, l. 10, for *lustre*, read *taste*.

GLEANINGS IN ENGLAND.

LETTER I.

TO THE BARON DE B.

London, May 1, 1798.

It is not without a pleasure known only to Friendship,—and where is the isolated wretch who knows not that?—I hear you still cherish the intention of visiting the Country from whence I have now the honour to address you; and that, whether “Grim-visag’d War shall smooth his wrinkled front,” or not, you will indulge a curiosity which has grown up with you from your earliest youth, of passing some time on a little handful of Earth, which is, comparatively, but as an ant-hill on the Globe; but which, *like* the ant-hill, is populated by the most industrious, ingenious, and wonder-working creatures in the universe.

The information which your last favour, by the route of Hamburgh, brought me, that your long-form'd design of coming amongst us, acknowledges a *new* motive in the "animating thought," as you generously call it, of our being again within reach of each other, is no small addition to my pride and pleasure. And your reminding me of my promise to give you some IDEA of my Country in return of the liberal and instructive services rendered me in yours, flatters my self-love, at the same time that it confirms your good opinion.

But you chide me, for so long appearing to neglect my native Land. Lovingly, and like a brother, indeed, but still you chide; and you measure my deserving your reproof, from the Letter which I sent you, of my being again on English ground; when I transmitted to you an account of the flowery * day I past immediately after my landing; and which the copy of the Books, I had the honour to transmit since,

* Introduction to Vol. I. of 'Gleanings through Wales, Holland and Westphalia.'

will shew, was printed as an introduction to what I had imported from other shores.

Knowing you could not arrange your affairs so as to leave Germany, for the term proposed, in less than five years, from the period of forwarding to you those remarks, I imagined, *they* would serve as a general description, till a more particular one became necessary; and I was willing, besides, that the observations I stood pledged to give you, should not be too remote from the time of their proving useful; lest with the loss of all their novelty, they should lose some of their interest.

Still you are dissatisfied. "A Gleaning of England!" you argue, "would be in *keeping* with the nature and spirit of your friend's former pictorial sketches, independent on all the compacts of private friendship; not only as the proper finish and crown of the correspondence, but as a tribute of gratitude and of patriotism to the talents, the dignity, and the beauty of the Island."

This is seductive reasoning, my dear Baron. But you have lived, chiefly, in an unemigrating

country;—persons of almost all countries may be comparatively so called with the wanderers of Great Britain:—perhaps, therefore, you do not know how often our *inland* travellers have trod the beaten, and some the unbeaten paths—that trips, tours, journals, and journies, through every nook and corner of the realm, frequently for the sole purpose of detailing, or giving in the gross, parts of their travel to others,—not to mention a considerable phalanx, that make very good books of this kind, without travelling at all, or at least only from one library to another;—a kind of literary worms which live upon any old leaf they can get at, and are even more abundant than our histories of England,—and that our histories are only to be out-numbered by our authors, and that *our* authors are only less incalculable than *yours*. Hence, it would be no easy task to find a river, or a rill, a palace, or a hut, that has not meandered or murmured, displayed its magnificence or boasted its humility, and been some way or another made known to fame by a “true-born Englishman.”

Were I disposed to break promise, I might

add to the above reasons for not re-describing the described, a fear to offer you the lenten entertainment of not simply, a twice, but a two thousand times told tale.

Of this there was less danger, in regard to the Letters which I formerly wrote from abroad; for though many had gone over the ground I took in foreign lands, they were very few, in comparison of the multitudes who staid at home; and, for one book that describes another country, we have a dozen which treats of our own: nay, the history of any one of our counties, or shires—the several shires, and counties, seeming to have contended which shall have produced the largest and longest story—would furnish you with more reading than what we have of trip and tour of all the world besides.

And what of other writers! Are *they* objectionable? Inasmuch as they imitate nature with truth and loveliness; as they develope with candour, and with skill, the yet more interesting pictures of the human heart; as they dwell fondly on its excellencies, and etch with light hand, its little frailties—taking care even in

their portraitures of vice, not to make their shades too sombrous—too deadly dark—and scorning with the pride of true Genius, to let Hate or Envy mix the colours,—such artists should be welcome, though they were a thousand fold more numerous than they are.

It will be with peculiar pleasure I shall consult, or refer you, as we go along, to such of those as have displayed the richness and the variety of their native land, whether in its productions of art or nature; its manners, or its genius; and who give you a proof of that genius, even in their descriptions of the country itself.

The point proposed, is an amusing, interesting, and true idea of England, and of Englishmen, in their various classes; and, towards your gaining this, I will, with the helps above mentioned, endeavour to be the Guide, which a man of your mind,—ingenious, candid, inquisitive, and literary—will have occasion for: Neither will I affect to disallow, though I am aware it implies a too flattering compliment on myself, that a residence in, and review of, what was to

be seen abroad, enables a man to judge with less prejudice of what is passing at home; helps him to weigh the possessions of the latter in a surer scale; to poise good with good, advantage with advantage; to make the national estimate with more precision; and, finally, to settle the moral and natural balance of Great Britain with other parts of Europe.

It is fortunate for me also, that an unshackled freedom, as to the delineation of men and things, places and people, was adopted in the first instance, because it will seem a matter of course in the second: and I shall thus have full liberty to pursue my usual, unencumbered mode of travelling without being set down as eccentric.

I beg it may, however, be fully understood, that I do by no means pledge myself, or pretend to make a journey THROUGH England, but to describe, after my manner, the things which shall impress my mind in an excursion to particular towns, and counties, where affection, curiosity, or partial favour, call me IN England!—an important monosyllable, which, you will observe,

underscored by a triple mark of emphasis on my paper, and which in print—for I trust this partial Tour will be acceptable to all minds congenial with yours—will be noted by Capitals.

And never was there a country more auspicious to travellers of this character than England; they may take their ground even as the stick falls, and be sure that it will not point to the barren; or, at worst, that the sterile will lead quickly to the fertile. The place, or the inhabitant, the soil, the situation, or the productions, will always render it pregnant with something which will prevent the eye from being long bent on vacancy.

These matters, then, being explained and adjusted before we set out, I will take the first fair day to begin our journey; diverging from the place of my present address—stupendous London!—the great central point, both of object and observation; and to which we may return, and pay the tribute and homage it commands, when the raven-winged days of Winter succeed to the livelier months, that are,

as you will perceive by the date of this Epistle, now smiling, upon the Country and upon our undertaking.

For the present, I have only to inform you, I shall be prepared with a duplicate of each Letter, or each parcel of Letters, I may send, to guard against the interruption of the mails, and the various "moving accidents of flood and field," which continue, alas! to retard not only the soft intercourse of private friendship, but the publick happiness, and whatever is most dear to the interests and affections of man.

LETTER II.

London, May 15, 1799.

ALTHOUGH I know you to be well grounded in general history, and, of course, have some previous acquaintance with that of the country from which I now write to you, it may not be amiss to desire you will have in recollection, even as you direct your course over the cliffs of Albion, that the people you design to visit, are the descendents of those hardy tribes who lived upon the produce of the chase, cloathing themselves with the skins which they threw off when they were in action; making thus the animals, which were the objects of their pursuit, supply them at once with food, raiment, and a defence against the rigours of the precarious climate in which they were born:—that their huts were scattered over the face of the island, without regularity or arrangement; their choice of a particular spot

being influenced by its happier supply of water and wood—that much of their bodies were exposed, and ferociously coloured with terrific figures, either to protect them from the weather, or to affright their foes *—that their towns, if,

* “ When the chill breeze of morning overspread,
Wav'd the dark boughs, that roof'd his sylvan bed,
Up the light Briton sprung—to chase the deer
Through Humber's vales, or healthy Cheviot drear :
Languid at noon, his fainting limbs he cast
On the warm bank, and sought his coarse repast ;
With acorns shaken from the neighbouring oak,
Or sapless bark that from the trunk he broke,
His meal he made ; and in the cavern'd dell,
Drank the hoarse wave that down the rough rocks fell.
In open sky he rests his head, and sees
The stars that twinkle through the waving trees.
On his bare breast the chilling dews descend ;
His yellow locks the midnight tempest rend.

“ Such were the race, who drank the light of day,
When lost in western waves Britannia lay ;
Content they wander'd o'er the heaths and moors,
Nor thought that ocean roll'd round other shores ;
Viewing the fires, that blaz'd around their skies,
'Mid the wide world of waters set and rise,
They vainly deem'd the twinkling orbs of light,
For them alone illum'd the vault of night :
For them alone the golden lamp of day,
Held its bright progress through th' etherial way.”

ABORIGINAL BRITONS,

as has been observed, a collection of miserable tenements, could deserve that name — were mostly built upon the coasts: where the poorest shed of a modern fisherman, in any of the sea-side villages to which I shall have the pleasure of conducting you, would have been thought a magnificent palace, even for the chieftain of their tribes—that the commodities of barter, in the majestic island, which is *now the emporium and grand mart of the world*, were chiefly the hides of those savage beasts, on whose flesh they feasted—that unconscious of the endearing ties of affection and love,* polygamy was permitted to a more than brutal extent, and, finally, that the government, which, with more of private and of public good, and less of evil, is now, perhaps, the most excellent, and certainly the *most happy of any upon the globe*, was simply derived from the authority of the parent, who, having given life, had, as it was thought, a natural right to dispose of the gift, as circum-

* *Uxores habent deni duodenique inter se communes.*
Cæsar de bello Gallico.

stances required—and, moreover, that religion, which has now for so many centuries held out the blessed influence of the mild system of JESUS CHRIST, was in the beginning dictated to the ancient inhabitants of Britain by those barbarous teachers the Druids,* who, have been so variously represented,—by some as a fraternity not less simple and guiltless, than the

* But they derived all their military and, perhaps, most of their energy as men from their BARDS.

“ ————— whose magic fingers strung
The Cambrian lyre.

Hail, ye who wandered by romantic streams,
With harps that glitter'd to the moon's pale beams;
Sooth'd by your midnight hymns was many a ghost,
Whose cold bones whiten'd Avon's dreary coast.

* * * * *

“ Fir'd by your magic songs, the Briton pour'd
A ten-fold fury; dar'd the uplifted sword;
Envy'd the shades of chiefs in battle slain,
And burn'd to join them on th' etherial plain;
For warrior souls, ye sung, would deathless bloom,
When the cold limbs lay mould'ring in the tomb.

* * * * *

with heart on fire,
They heard the heroic strains of Cadwall's lyre;
In Mador's verse renew its mortal toils,
And shine through Hoel's songs in hostile spoils.”

Bards, awful by their practical virtue, no less than by their professional character, and benignly chastizing, or reproofing, vices from which they were themselves exempt—and as one of their advocate historians expresses it, “using no other arms than the reverence due to integrity,”—while, by others, they have been drawn as a sanguinary brotherhood, which sought the refuge of woods and caves to perpetrate unequalled depredations under the mask of piety, sacrificing human victims, and accumulating the absurdities of superstition on the horrors of murder. The truth lies, possibly, between both of these descriptions, yet it seems on all hands agreed, that the original possessors of the fair land to which you meditate a visit, were under the controul of these persons, who gradually acquired such an ascendancy,* that they were in

* “ ——— the Druid priests impress’d

A sacred horror on the savage breast.

Midst rocks and wastes their GROVE tremendous rose ;

O’er the rude altars hung in dread repose.

A twilight pale ; like the dim sickly noon,

When the mid-sun retires behind the moon,

the end invested with the power not only of pastors but of judges ; no laws being instituted with-

From sounding caverns rush'd the darksome flood,
 Each antique trunk was stain'd with human blood.
 'Twas sung, that birds in terror left the shade ;
 That lightnings harmless round the branches play'd ;
 And in the hour of fate, the CENTRAL OAK
 Shook with the spirit of the God, and spoke.
 The Roman check'd awhile his conquering band,
 And dropt the imperial eagle from his hand ;
 And seem'd, while shudd'ring borne through Mona's wood,
 To tread the confines of the Stygian flood.

“ What direful rites these gloomy haunts disgrace ;
 Bane of the mind, and shame of man's high race ?
 'Twas deem'd the circles of the waving wand,
 The mystic figures, and the mutt'ring band,
 Held o'er all nature's works as powerful sway,
 As the great Lord, and Maker of the day.
 Rocks, by infernal spells, and magic pray'r,
 Shook from their base, and trembled high in air ;
 The blasted stars their faded light withdrew ;
 The lab'ring moon shed down a baleful dew.
 Spirits of hell ærial dances led,
 And rifled graves gave up the pale cold dead.
 Imperial man, creation's Lord and pride,
 To crown the sacrificial horrors, died :
 That HESUS, direly pleas'd, in joyous mood
 Might flesh their swords, and glut their scythes in blood ;
 And TARANUS, amidst his tempest smile,
 And roll innocuous thunders o'er the isle.”

RICHARDS'S ABORIGINAL BRITONS.

out their approbation, nor any vice punished with bonds or death but by virtue of their sentence.*

* We are told, that the chief means employed by them to keep the people in awe, and to extort a ready compliance with their orders, was a kind of excommunication. Whoever fell under their censure, was not only excluded all religious assemblies as a wicked profane person, but was also rendered incapable of any public office, or receiving any benefit from the protection of their laws, and was shunned by the rest of the people as much as if he had been infected with some contagious distemper.

The horrible custom, which prevailed among the Britons, of sacrificing a great number of men at the same time, was performed thus : they first erected a gigantic figure of a man, made up of basket-work, so as to contain a great many persons in the body and limbs of it, which, when filled with the miserable wretches pitched upon for this purpose, the whole was consumed with fire. It is true, that this sacrifice commonly consisted of murderers, robbers, and thieves ; yet upon great occasions, where the number of criminals did not suffice, even innocent persons sometimes shared this cruel fate : for they imagined, that such practices were very efficacious in appeasing the wrath of their gods, and averting any public calamity. Some writers have endeavoured to account for the origin of this enormous wicker-statue by telling us, that the Britons had been cruelly oppressed by certain giants, or at least men of a very extraordinary stature ; and that, in hatred to their memory, they thus burnt them in effigy !

The chief residence of our Druids was in the Isle of Anglesea ; and such was the deference paid to them, that the

I wish you to take this retrospective view, that you may be the more forcibly impressed with what your eyes, your head, and heart will observe and feel when you are amongst us—when you shall have had an opportunity to

Druids of Gaul resorted thither to receive their instructions. Besides foreign Druids, even the youth of other countries were sent for education into Britain. Their method of teaching consisted in making their scholars learn by rote a great number of verses, containing the several precepts of their religion and morality; for though they preserved the principles of their belief and practice wrote in Greek characters, they never suffered any copies to be taken. Among other doctrines inculcated by them, they seem to have been particularly zealous in enforcing the belief of an immediate transmigration, so that the soul was no sooner expelled one body by death, whether natural or violent, but it was instantly united in the womb to another body. This added an acquired courage to their natural bravery, making them prodigal of a life they expected to be renewed the next instant. The Druids seldom went to war unless some very extraordinary danger threatened their country; and then their presence seems to have been of no other use, than, by their enthusiasm, to animate the combatants.

The source from whence the above statement has been gathered, well deserves the perusal of every foreigner, particularly the *introductory part*, which gives a clear and distinct view of our constitution, and every branch of the legislature. It is called, the *Geography of England*; a book published about fifty years ago, and in few hands.

enter fully into the *contrast*, by comparing the same people in their progress to *nearly the perfection of social life*, from an unaccommodated, and *almost savage state*—destitute alike of science and of morals—ignorant of every charity—every decency—utterly unconscious of the interior graces of the mind, and scarcely bearing the external form of educated man.*

This, you will tell me, is the infant history of the whole human race : the origin of feeble, uncivilized mortals through every part of the globe. But, you will at the same time allow, that the progression of these weak, strong,

* The subsequent lines from the elegant poem just quoted, present a bold finishing of the portrait :

“ Rude as the wilds around his sylvan home,
In savage grandeur see the Briton roam.
Bare were his limbs, and strung with toil and cold,
By untam'd nature cast in giant mould.
O'er his broad brawny shoulders loosely flung,
Shaggy and long his yellow ringlets hung.
His waist an iron-belted faulchion bore,
Massy and purpled deep with human gore :
His scarr'd and rudely-painted limbs around,
Fantastic, horror-striking figures frown'd,
Which monster-like, ev'n to the confines ran
Of nature's work, and left him hardly man.”

diminutive and august beings, from the childhood of their powers, up to their proudest maturity, has been as widely different as the climates by which many of them were separated from each other; and I trust, you will have various instances, ere you quit this great island,—where formerly, it is known, “roamed the bear, the wolf, and the wild boar,” scarce more barbarous than their human associate,—to confirm the character which has so often been given of the English—that to be brave, and jealous of its LIBERTY,* is natural and hereditary to

* The characteristics of Liberty in the savage state of the Island—its extinction in the early stages of our Monarchy, its revival and influence in the present civilized state of manners, as producing public security, giving rise to public works, and calling forth the powers of the mind, are given in so animated a style by the amiable Writer who has already thrown such a lustre on the subject of this Letter, that it would be unjust to him, and unkind to you, to withhold them from you—particularly, as the performance in which they are delineated, being in some measure local, (a prize Poem at Oxford and long since out of print,) is of course, very scarce at present, and though an acquisition to any man who hath preserved it, may never fall into your hands—besides that it better illumines the important history

them, in the first instance, and habitual to them in the second—that, although they are suffi-

of British Freedom, than any thing I ever remember to have read in our language.

“ In Albion’s ancient days, ’midst northern snows,
Hardy and bold, immortal FREEDOM rose.
She roam’d the sounding margin of the deep,
Conway’s wild bank, and Cader’s craggy steep:
A bloody wolf-skin o’er her back was spread;
An axe she bore, and wild weeds grac’d her head.
On Snowdon’s cliffs reclin’d, she watch’d on high
The tempest-driven clouds, that cross’d the sky;
Or caught with list’ning ear the sounding gale,
When the dread war-song shook the distant dale.
At battle’s close she roam’d the ensanguin’d plain,
And gaz’d the threatening aspects of the slain.
Now from ignoble sloth she rarely rose,
For *savage* Freedom sinks to mute repose;
Now to wild joys, and the bowl’s madd’ning pow’rs,
Gave up the torpid sense and listless hours;
Now joyful saw the naked sword display’d,
Though brother’s blood flow’d reeking from the blade.
By tyrants sunk she rose more proudly great,
As ocean swells indignant in the strait;
And borne in chains from Cambria’s mountains bleak,
Rais’d Virtue’s generous blush on Cæsar’s cheek.

“ But, ah! full many a dark and stormy year,
She dropt o’er Albion’s isle the patriot tear.
Retir’d to mountains, from the craggy dell,
She caught the Norman tyrant’s curfew knell:

ently persevering to endure toil in all the
industrious, they are lovers of the *elegant* arts,

Sad to her view the Baron's castle frown'd
Bold from the steep, and aw'd the plains around ;
She sorrowing heard the papal thunders roll,
And mourn'd the ignoble bondage of the soul ;
She blush'd, O, Cromwell! blush'd at Charles's doom ;
And wept, misguided Sidney, o'er thy tomb."

" But NOW REVIV'D, she boasts a purer cause,
Refin'd by science, form'd by generous laws :
High hangs her helmet in the banner'd hall,
Nor sounds her clarion but at honour's call.
Now walks the land with olive chaplets crown'd,
Exalting worth, and beaming safety round :
With secret joy and conscious pride admires
The patriot spirit, which herself inspires :
Sees barren wastes with unknown fruitage bloom ;
Sees Labour bending patient o'er the loom ;
Sees Science rove through academic bowers ;
And peopled Cities lift their spiry towers :
Trade swells her sails wherever ocean rolls,
Glow's at the line and freezes at the poles :
While through unwater'd plains and wond'ring meads
Waves not its own the obedient river leads."

" But chief the god-like MIND, which bears impress'd
Its Maker's glorious image full confest ;
Noblest of works created ; more divine,
Than all the starry worlds, that nightly shine ;
Form'd to live on, unconscious of decay,
When the wide universe shall melt away :

and capable of conducting them to the greatest perfection—that, if they sometimes err on the side of a rough honesty, they seldom offend on that of a polished insincerity—that, the base arts of adulation make no part of the national character—and that, although, I fear, one cannot, truly, give them the graces of that *general* urbanity, which smoothes the path of the traveller in your own, and some other countries, the more essential duties of generosity, pity, and protection, even to their most determined foes, have, in various periods of their history,—and certainly, never more eminently than at present—done honour to themselves and to humanity; and, finally, that—compounded as they are, of as many nations as the mixtures of language they converse in—that insipid *monotone* of character which deadens most other

The MIND which hid in savage breasts of yore,
Lay like Golconda's gems, an useless ore;
Now greatly dares sublimest arms to scan;
Enriches Science, and ennobles man;
Unveils the semblance, which its God bestow'd;
And draws more near the fount, from whence it flow'd."

countries, is not found in Great Britain ; but that a rich, entertaining, energetic and almost endless diversity, marks the manners and the temper, the thoughts and compositions of its native and naturalized inhabitants.

Amongst these strong virtues and varied talents, that there should be a proportionate quantum of vice, of folly, and all the shades of these from dark to darker ; or that some inveterate habits of prejudice, and some determined nationalities should therewith blend themselves, you will be prepared, by your skill in human nature itself ; to expect to give you, as occurrences arise, some illustrations of *all* these, in a way, that may bring to your eye impressively, our MIND AND CHARACTER, will be the endeavour of this correspondence. At the same time, my dear Baron, on your arrival in this land of wonders, ten thousand peculiarities of great and little, of good and evil—the former I trust always preponderant—will, progressively, open on your eye corporeal, and be conveyed to your mental vision beyond the powers of pen or pencil to

pourtray, even though our Shakspeare held the one and our Reynolds the other.

For the geographic description and general situation of the Island, you can want no guide, as your reading must have long since informed you how we stand in the map of the world, and in the favour of nature. But were such intelligence necessary, I could refer you to various auxiliaries, each exhibiting a fair and just specimen of the country and its domestic historians. These will all tell you, and tell you truly, though, I think, not any of them more clearly or agreeably than an ingenious writer * of a very ingenious family: "That the face of the country affords all the beautiful variety which can be formed in the most extensive tracts of the globe. In some parts, verdant plains extend far as the eye can reach, watered by copious streams, and covered with innumerable cattle. In others, the pleasing vicissitudes of gently-rising hills and bending vales, fertile in corn, waving with wood,

* Dr. Aikin.

and interspersed with meadows, offer the most delightful landscapes of rural opulence and beauty. Some abound with prospects of a more romantic kind; lofty mountains, craggy rocks, deep narrow dells, and tumbling torrents: nor are there wanting, as a contrast to so many agreeable scenes, the gloomy features of black barren moors, and wide uncultivated heaths."

When we come to illustrate, by particular proofs, this general account, and when you have *tried* those proofs by the criticism of the living eye, and the confirming heart, I feel assured, that you will allow the justice of an opinion that has for ages prevailed, and been circulated concerning us,—that no country in the world can equal the cultivated parts of England for the great number of beautiful scenes, with which it is adorned. The variety of high and low lands, both of them forming prospects that fill the most luxuriant imagination—the richness of the corn fields—the freshness of the pasture grounds—the intermixture of plantation and enclosure—the majestic seats, comfortable

houses, cheerful villages, enviable cots, and well-stocked farms, sometimes animating the most retired parts of the country, and sometimes rising in the neighbourhood of well-populated towns, and magnificent cities, decorating the most vivid colours of nature, with the most ingenious and useful aids of art—all these, afford a proud delight to the native, and must impress every man of every other country, with a conviction of its being, *indeed*, the Queen of Isles.

Of its climate, we shall have much to say as we pass on: meantime, we may boldly assert, with the sensible Delineator above quoted, that, although England is situated in the northern part of the temperate zone, no country is cloathed with so beautiful and lasting a verdure, and that the rigours of winter and the heats of summer are felt in a much less degree than in parallel climates on the Continent—while the sea-ports of Holland, and of your country, my loved friend, are every winter locked up with ice, ours are never known to suffer this inconvenience. I am aware, however, you have

heard so much of our heavy atmosphere, and its melancholy consequences, that it will require far more eloquence than is in the possession of your present correspondent, to prove, that even this humour of our air is attended with various benefits. And though you will find all this set down, right patriotically, in our written books, and maintained in our conversations, ocular demonstration alone can satisfy you, that the diversity of our weather secures the island from those extremes of heat and cold to which other nations, within the same degree of latitude, are annually exposed, and that it is to this *moderation* of the air and *variegation* of the weather, that we live to as great an age as in any part of Europe. But the prejudice of our fogs, and the vaporous evils they are presumed to engender,—even to the mixing with our blood, till they convert us into self-murderers—is, I know, so strong, that I prepare you for my determined, yet warrantable, vindication of my country on this matter, so often as an opportunity of defence presents itself. In the mean while, the remark of one of our British monarchs, as recorded by

Sir William Temple, deserves a place in your memory, and I take it from that writer, that it may be ready for your use when you are our guest. It was, we are told, an observation of our Second Charles, in reply to some persons who were reviling our climate. "That," said the king, "is the best climate where a man can be abroad in the air with the most pleasure, or at least, without trouble or inconvenience *the most days in the year, and the most hours in a day*, and that I can be in England."

It would be repetition of a common school-boy fact to tell you, that civil policy has distributed the kingdom into fifty-two counties or shires; of which, according to the delineator's perspicuous arrangement, there are six northern, four bordering on Wales, twelve midland, eight eastern, three south-eastern, four southern, three south-western, six of North Wales, and six of South Wales: nor should I have mentioned this division, had our correspondence been limited to your own eye; but, as I design it to endeavour at a more general service to foreigners, after it has, in the first instance, paid

its homage to you, the little time which has been consumed in this,—to you, superfluous communication,—will be forgiven!

You will now suffer me to be your reporter and precursor as the affections may lead; but at present, you will be glad of a short pause, in the interval of which, I am proud to subscribe myself, very faithfully yours.

LETTER III.

Bromley, Kent, May 30, 1798.

M_Y intention, was to have set out, in my accustomed way, by gentle stages.

“Sedate to think, and watching each event,” even with the first fair day, as I before mentioned, that should succeed the period of closing my introductory Letter. My purpose was, to direct my course from the metropolis of the British empire, to one of its celebrated universities; making a pause at Cambridge—which, as a seminary of British education, and for the literary and sacred awe that a sight of its classic edifices inspires, is one of the places every stranger should visit; and from thence to have taken a circuitous tour into different parts of Norfolk, Suffolk, and Huntingdonshire; not, because those divisions of England afford the best opportunity of giving you a first favourable

impression; but, because, I stood pledged to several beloved friends, and relations, in each of those counties, to parcel out the present summer amongst them; and as it is sometimes good policy to begin the display of what we have in store for curiosity or for friendship, with the less commanding articles—as dealers in sights, artfully conduct you to the minuter objects, before they usher you to the proudest, and largest of all their lions, whether the said lions be dead or alive—I imagined it would be a measure of dexterity and prudence, to introduce you to our gradual ascents, easiest declivities, and softest scenery, before I took you to the depths of our precipice, and summits of our mountains? Perhaps, too, a consciousness that we could do nothing with you in stupendous heights, and dizzy eminences, till I had beguiled you from the lofty ideas and feelings which the tour you made last Autumn of the sublimities of Switzerland must have inspired,—might secretly enter into my plan of presenting you to the contrasting views of verdant tranquillity and scenes of content—where indeed,

Nature herself, seems to seek relief from her magnificence—her cloud-piercing rock, terrific steep, and unfathomed abyss, to take repose amongst her lawns, recover her serenity in a less aspiring clime, and condescends, herself to become a cottager, in an *English* cottage, my friend, where, I hope to shew you, the Goddess has not been a niggard of her favours, and that if she has not fixed the humbler dwellings of our land on the cloud-top'd hill, or beneath the luxury of a voluptuous sky, she has permitted her lowly children to rear them amidst the violets of the field and the lilies of the vale, and where, so far from their being despoiled, or invaded—as in some prouder climes, where neither a voluptuous sky, nor the cloud-top'd hill are secure from violation,—there lives not a man, who, unpermitted, dares to pluck one fragrant leaf!

Yes, I certainly had some motive like this, mingling with others, for intending to visit our least ambitious counties first. But my design has been long interrupted. Sickness, my dear Baron, which so frequently suspends, or wholly

frustrates all the proud arrangements of feeble mortals in their journey of life, fell on my plans a few hours after I had dispatched to you my second letter from London, where I have been confined from that date to the present; a lapse of the fairest of the spring months, out of which I have only been able to rescue one little week, which,—change of air being thought indispensable,—I have passed at the place of address, a small town in Kent, situated at the distance only of twelve miles from London, and for which, besides its being the residence of some beloved friends, is endeared to me by other considerations I shall mention in their place. I am much recovered.

That the purest air should assist in producing the purest pleasure, both of thoughts and feelings, is natural. It is reasonable, that the imagery of nature, in the diversity of her beauties, pressing on the eye, and entering into the heart, should not a little dispose to such sensations and ideas. Persons, resident in the country, may, perhaps, be less susceptible of this than its occasional visitors. We know that the constant sight of

the most captivating objects invariably diminishes their attraction. Indeed, we seem to have neither eyes nor ears for what forms a necessary part of our daily and hourly intercourse. This must, however, be understood of things inanimate: the loveliest flower may bloom and die unheeded by him whose villa is situated in the midst of a garden; and the finest ring of bells will scarcely be heard, or at least with little distinction of sounds, by those persons who live in the precincts of a church. Yet, in a general sense, none of these persons may want taste or feeling; some may have even a relish of natural beauty, and some may be enamoured of musick: a similar flower blooming in any remote garden, though neglected in their own, or in their neighbours; and even a less harmonious set of bells in a distant church might call forth their attention, and excite their applause. We will not entangle this fact with abstract reasoning, my dear Baron; it is obvious enough that an unwearied familiarity with objects the most beautiful and sublime, (and those of vegetation are certainly of this kind,) makes

them literally "fade in the eye," even if they do not "pall upon the sense."

Never, perhaps, has this remark been more strongly confirmed than in this visit to Bromley, after so many months residence in London, amidst the perplexities of business, and the languors of indisposition. I arrived, and have had my vernal banquet, you see, before this most charming month * of the twelve has shone itself away. The contrast has been extraordinary: the sensations of your correspondent have been like what might be supposed to attend a person, who, after a long and disturbed state of slumber, in which he had been dreaming of clouds of dust, and of smoke, of unmitigating heat, and of corroding cares, has, by a change in his vision, found his imagination at length conveying him to scenes the reverse of these. Early in the morning I paid my acknowledgment to every object; the Sun and all which he warms and blesses with life, were in the prime

* May.

of their magick ; and although all was frolick and song, kind words, and smiling faces around, and above, sufficient to diffuse smiles and joy through the world, I do not believe, that within its round there could have been seen a happier being than your friend. Mending in health, and my spirits, every hour this felicity has continued increasing through the week. O what a space for man to confess he has been most happy ! Blest Gleaner ! thy felicity broke forth in song ; spontaneous emotions in which every man feels something of the poet. The thoughts and feelings of the lay were suggested by the immediate objects. These, at such a season, amid such scenery, are always abundant : from those, you will accept a

SUMMER TRIBUTE TO NATURE.

YE vocal copses, and ye hedge-rows small,
And all your tuneful tenantry :—ye trees
Of forest stature in yon monarch wood,
And every harmonist which ye embower,
Accept the greeting of a friend !—all hail !

Hail to the lane by many a verdant curve
Conducting to the mead ; a brook unseen,
But not unheard, musician of the way ;—
The swallow's mazy windings, now transverse,
And now direct, and twittering as she flies :
The gentle redbreast, hopping in my path ;
The youngling lamb, gay foal, and new-fledg'd bird
Trying its wing, now enterprizing bold,
And timid now, as dubious of its powers :
The tinkling bell upon the leader sheep,
And Thou, my unambitious friend, poor wren,
Whom in that hedge-row, lowly as thyself,
But full of sweets, upon thy nest, I see.

Welcome the thicket blackbird's echoing note,
And even thy chirp, unheeded as it is
By rural swains, familiar with the sound,

Unvaried as the lapwing's, sparrow trim!
 Hail to thy thrilling strain, sad philomel;
 And the deep foliage where invisible
 Thou pour'st thy widow'd soul, O moaning dove!

Welcome that well-known walk between the wheat,
 Allowing scarce a foot-way to the step
 Of solitary wanderer, yet broad
 And rich in golden promise—speed it, heaven!
 In the abundant hope of social good,
 Ye lovers, blest to wreath the tender arm,
 Around the chosen fair, O be content,
 Though the scant way admits not bosom friend,
 To follow close the steps of her you love,
 Rather than make more wide the waving fence,
 Big with the bread of life—and, happy, think
 Each ear contains a blessing for the poor.

Nor is thy note, O mourner Linnet lorn,
 Whom yonder knot of ruthless boys, have spoil'd
 Of all thy summer hopes, to me unwelcome.
 For, from the little robbers I've redeem'd
 Thy feeble progeny, and thus, replace,
 Their trembling limbs e'en in the cradle small
 Which thou hast made; there thy warm bosom, soon
 Shall hush to rest *their* terrors and thine *own*.

Sweet fields! I love ye for yourselves alone,

Unsullied by one interested thought ;
 For not a pasture, nor a lamb ye feed,
 Nor one sweet bird, nor yet the lowliest shrub
 That bowers him while he sings, or holds
 His green recess, your Bard can call his own ;
 But his warm HEART has property in *all*,
 And, haply, more enjoys of each the sweets
 Than they who proudly think the world is theirs !

Ah, how my spirit freshens, as I taste
 That life-restoring breeze ! I climb the hill,
 To meet the heavenly visitant. I seem
 To feed upon the vernal banquet as it blooms ;
 'Tis life renew'd ! and after sickness too
 And care-corroding months in the dim town,
 Where head-long driven amidst the mass of things,
 Dizzy and indistinct, the head confus'd,
 And a long winter's fever on the mind
 Has prey'd ! Escap'd from that rude roar !
 There's not a blade of grass, nor insect green
 It nourishes ; but has a secret charm.
 These, and a myriad more, the Summer Train !
 Unnam'd, unnumber'd, are to feeling dear.

Thou, fair example of economy,
 Assiduous Bee ! culling thy honied freight
 From yonder bank of variegated sweets ;

While, o'er thy head, that thriftless Butterfly,
Pursues his vagrant course irregular,
An idle flutterer of a summer hour—
Unwarn'd by thee, and the congenial tribe
That underneath the blossom where thou sitst
Have rear'd their small, yet throng'd Republick.

And thou, my faithful *Tiny*,* household friend;
Who though twelve months of absence has elaps'd
Since last we met—an age in thy short span!
Flew to my lap, and with an honest joy
Confess'd a friend! most welcome thy true love!
Ah, longer livers, who have greater cause
To recognize the hand that gave them bread,
And held the cordial to their famish'd lip,
In far less time have prov'd ingrate. On thee
What more has been bestow'd than the small crumbs
Ev'n from the genial board, where I, like thee,
Was but a guest. I gave thy perquisite
Haply a little earlier, but reserv'd
For *Tiny's* banquet: yet thy memory
Of this scant boon retains a kinder sense
Than thou, Avaro, who, in one short day,
The day of trouble too, forgot the man

* The name of a small dog.

Who from a wreck built up thy bark again,
And sent thee proudly on a golden voyage,
From whence return'd thou saw'st thy helping friend,
Saw'st thy preserver struggling with the storm,
And left him to the billow——

Nature come!

Come with thy flow'ry herbs and healing balms,
And bring along more than Lethean streams,
To cure a wound like this—Hail woods profound,
That shield the Poet from his thankless friend!

And thou, O MUSE! too long deserted maid,
Yet in full crouds remember'd—ah, accept
Again thy truant votary; deign to tune
Once more his lyre, and arm it with new sounds
To soothe his mind disorder'd, fit to taste
The gay, the solemn, through fair nature's works.

Welcome *all* These, and ev'n the deep'ning din
Of echoing cannon from the neighbouring port,
And of yon drum obtrusive, for it sounds
To guard my native land and these fair scenes
From nature's direst foe, abhorrent war!

But far more welcome ev'n than these fair scenes,
Or the lov'd MUSE herself, the greeting look
Of rural FRIENDS!—for still the joy supreme
Of social man must spring from human kind!

And yon poor almsman living on the gates
 He scarce can open to the passenger,
 Into whose well-remember'd cap of serge
 My Poet purse has each returning year
 Drop't its scant mite, and blest it as it fell,—
 Speaks in the silent language of his smile,
 To see me once again, more near my heart,
 And in the deepen'd wrinkle that I trace
 In his sunk cheek since last I bade farewell
 Than all the sounds of Nature's minstrelsy
 Which have mine ear regal'd in this green walk,
 Or all the blossoms which the sun has pour'd
 To charm mine eye, into the lap of May.

THRICE welcome then, my FRIENDS! for ye can
 give

Fresh perfume to the rose:— Ah, whether placed
 In spacious halls beneath the sculptur'd roof,
 Or the small cottage, where the ivy climbs
 The wall of clay, ev'n to the idle moss
 And useful houseleek on the broken thatch,
 A recollection, equal, fond and true
 Await my village favourites, to prove
 They are the sovereigns of the scene! * *theirs.*

* MAJOR JOHN SCOTT has a seat at Bromley; and while
 Friendship, pure from the ordeal, marked by indefatigable,

The high prerogatives of scepter'd man,
 And all things else, bird, beast, stream, herb,
 Subordinate; reflected from *their* power,
 As the sun's ray lends lustre to the moon.

O! let me haste to yonder rustick seat
 Which circles the huge trunk of that old oak
 Upon the furzy heath, where memory flies
 Back to the hour, when, in my boyish time
 I sat and listen'd to the voice of Truth,
 Reason and Wit, and polish'd Elegance,
 Breath'd from the lips of one, who aptly join'd
 The Sage's wisdom, with the Poet's lore,*

perhaps by unexampled diligence in the most arduous cause that ever engaged the attention of men, explaining and defending it almost alone against a host for many years—even the cause of WARREN HASTINGS—of whom you have long since possessed my opinion, and it is now the opinion of the greatest part of mankind—while such a friendship is held sacred amongst us, the conduct of this gentleman will be precious—even had his efforts ultimately failed as much as they have succeeded.

MAJOR SCOTT has recently added to his name that of WARING, to which is annexed a spacious residence, and some ample possessions; but, wherever he and his family remove, as *benevolence* will certainly form part of the household, it is to be hoped, *gratitude* will follow.

* Doctor HAWKESWORTH, on whose beautiful and various literature it will be amongst my delights in reserve, to

My Tutor and my Friend, and skill'd alike
To move the fancy, and to mend the heart.
'Twas to this bench we oft repair'd; yon spire
We oft have view'd together—now, alas!
It marks the church-yard where his reliques lie:
There will I speed, and bending o'er the sod,
Breathe from my grateful soul the prayer which oft
That soul has pour'd on HAWKESWORTH'S undeck'd
grave!

Hail social Joy! and welcome social Grief!
And these sweet scenes where both alternate woo
The tender heart.
O! what again shall draw me from these bounds
Where, with blest Nature, Peace and Pleasure reign,
With flow'rs and fragrance crown'd?—What sound is
that?
Hark!—'tis the MAIL-HORN'S interesting note—
My eager step pursues it, passes quick
The meads, the shades, unheeded—presses on
To hear, tidings of thee, Agenor good,

expatiate when we meet;—an Author, who to as much of
the strength of our Johnson, as was either useful or agreeable,
added the sweetness and amenity in which that great writer
was deficient: and the same distinction marked their man-
ners as men.

Left in the world divided from thyself,
Thy dearer self : or else, perchance, of thee
Unfortunate Cleone : or thou, Friend,
Whose annual promise soon should be fulfill'd,
My youth's *first* Mentor. Yes, there is a lure,
Stronger than verdure's magick, or the charm
Of feather'd choristers, or rural scenes,
Or happy maidens, or aught *happy* else—
The potent spell that draws me to the spot
Where those I love are *sorrowing*—Shades, adieu!

Without entering farther into the description of the favourite little village, which has furnished my Muse with these slight touches of her pencil, I shall just note, that, in the year 955, one of our early monarchs, Edgar, is said to have presented the manor to the bishops of Rochester, who have still a palace here; that, on the episcopal ground, a mineral spring of the quality of the Tunbridge waters invites the valetudinarians—but invites in vain—being too near *home*—I mean the metropolis-home—for any body, but a few stray patients whom the doctors force to the fountain, and whom business, or finances, limit to the nearest remedies.

But though the Bromley mineral, has been proved, by a chemical analysis; to be *more* strongly impregnated with the salutary particles that form the basis of the other water, and though Fashion cannot get to Tunbridge without passing Bromley,—the few well-bred invalids who really are sent to the former for health, never think of stopping to take a draught from the neglected stream of the latter, but speed to the more polite fountain, where health, and the soft vanities of life, may be united.

There is a college in this village sacred to clergymen's widows, erected by one of the bishops of Rochester, Dr. Warner, a descendant from whom, is one of the most extraordinary existing characters of our Island—of whom in his order.

The county of KENT is too important a part of England, upon all accounts, to be passed by thus transiently—but it must be the object of some future tour. This sketch of a particular spot, however, will, I hope, be received as no unfavourable specimen of what it has to

offer, when the hour of its gleaning shall come.

Meanwhile, I cannot but point out to your heart a little village on the return to London from this place called LEE; not on account of the Hamlet itself, though that, being environed by the villas on Blackheath, is pleasant; but for the sake of some very singularly affectionate circumstances which attach more to the repositories of the dead than the mansions of the living.

In the church-yard of the above-named village, are deposited the remains of the Right Hon. Trevor Charles Roper Baron DACRE, who is preserved to the memory by more powerful ties upon it than his wealth and titles; or the common traditions of his having been born on one day, and died on another.—Suffer me to lead you, with consecrating steps, to what better separates him from the surrounding and oblivious mass of Mortality. You will one day, I trust, read the whole of the inscription graven on his tomb: Meanwhile, I shall offer you a partial extract.

“His afflicted widow, as a testimony of their distinguished and unclouded union, for upwards of twenty years; their unexampled happiness, and of the unbounded confidence in which they lived; and as a sincere token of her real gratitude for his uniform, endearing affection, and particular generosity,—her deep-felt sorrow, and tenderest remembrance,—has erected this unadorned monument, and herself inserted these well-known truths to his beloved memory, accounting them most consonant to the purity of his life, his mild disposition, his amiable temper, and genuine character.”

This conjugal tribute proceeds in the same strain, and closes with the mourner's assurance, that “she submits, with pious faith, to the will of her God, and trusts in the same intercession to his mercy with brightest hopes of re-union in eternal bliss.”

In the spirit of this attachment, she has acted ever since the æra of her loss, to the present hour; and will, probably, continue so to deport herself to the latest of her life; at least, while the power is given her to walk, or to be con-

veyed to the sacred spot where she has enshrined her heart.

Lady Dacre has been in the practice of visiting the grave of her husband twice a day since the time of his burial: and as very many of the inhabitants of the village, report, once in each night. She has agreed with a person to keep the precincts of the tomb sacred from every prophanity both of ill accident, and malicious design: indeed, from the elements and winds of Heaven, which she literally will not suffer "to visit the grave too roughly."

While I was marking these reflections with my pencil, I observed the lady who had called them forth, coming towards the church-yard with hasty and anxious steps, which, on perceiving I was seated on the style, she directed to a smaller gate, but found it locked, and seemed much disappointed. Unwilling to interrupt her pious progress, I quitted the style, when, bending in acknowledgment, she passed into the church-yard, but was again diverted from her purpose; a party of people, it being Sunday, were hastening to the tomb, in order to read, as I had done,

its inscription. The throng increasing by the entrance of some additional company, her ladyship went back into the road, where she remained walking backwards and forwards within view of the church-yard, till the intruders had left it, when returning to the spot from which she had been so long withheld, she redoubled her attention, and I saw her, while I stood aloof, myself unseen, kneel in reverence at the foot of the grave, where, after remaining some time, I presume in prayer, she went back to the villa where in his life time she had so long been blest in the society of him she now bewails.

Such are the matin and vesper, if not, likewise, the midnight, homages of her affianced heart. Yet, certain singularities of dress, and of manner, with the yet greater singularity of an attachment so long faithful to the ashes of its object, and, perhaps, a barbed regret in her bosom that makes her inattentive to, if it does not even absorb all thought or care of the world's usages, have brought on her, I understand, much of that wild conjecture, malign interpretation, and unseemly ridicule, which are always attendant

upon every one who deviates from the ordinary ceremonies of life. And whosoever presumes to think, to act, or to feel for themselves, are set down either as affected or insane. To disregard prescribed forms and ceremonies, even in our joys or sorrows, is considered as setting at defiance the arbitrary laws of society; thus our very smiles and tears are in awe of "the world's dread laugh;" and it is hard to say where the controul of fashion may stop, or how far her capricious system may dispossess sweet and simple Nature of her rights. She has already taught mothers to deny the sustenance of their own bosoms to their own offspring; near and dear relatives to look upon it as ill-bred to follow a parent's, or a child's coffin to the grave, and to content themselves with performing the last sacred offices by proxy—a task consigned to hired mourners—and to be caught visiting the tomb of a lover, wife or husband, oftener than the imperious modes of the world allow, may not, it seems, in these refined times, pass uncensured.

Hallowed, however, be the tender and generous fortitude, and sacred be the pious

griefs that are superior to, and that resist such contemptible dominion over all the ribald jests and insults, that a reverence for *natural impression* induces. And who, my dear Baron, that has duly contemplated the varieties by which he is surrounded, many of which are, no doubt, appropriate to his own peculiar modes of being acted upon, and acting, shall dare to accuse any form of words or actions, to express joy or woe, as the results of affectation, hypocrisy or madness, because similar sensations are displayed by himself or others, by different signs and tokens? A genuine felicity or anguish may be felt by a thousand enraptured or suffering beings with equal truth, and often with equal force; but the external forms and ceremonies may be diversified, even as the causes of our happiness and woe. Affliction drives some to the depths of solitude, to mourn, unseen, like the wounded deer; but it impels others to rush into society, even though in the hour of gladness they might have cherished a love of the shade: the effect is different, the causes, as to the sincerity of the emotion, the same. God knows, my friend, there is enough

of pretention, trick, and parade in this world, with respect to our feelings, our passions, and our principles; and the shadow is but too frequently mistaken for the substance! But in the name of that liberality which we all stand in need of, let us not impute to ostentation, or to fraud, whatever deviates from ourselves, where the deviations are only in manner, or the usual customs of life. And as to the mourner which gave occasion to these remarks, if there should still be any persons disposed to scoff at, or disbelieve the faithful sentiment that has long conducted her to the place where most things are forgotten—the mansions of the DEAD; let them condescend to imitate her bounty to the LIVING. Let their charities emulate her's, and if by the kinder allotment of Providence—if we may *dare* to call it kinder—they have no relative or friend in the grave to lament: if they have none of her *misery*, let them be animated by the spirit of her benevolence. In this there can be no mockery. It is an active spirit, that literally goes about to do good. Of which—as it is no less difficult to make the doubters of

sorrow, and of the affection on which it is founded, believe that it can continue its duties after its object has long mingled with the dust, in the manner they are cherished and practised by Lady Dacre, than to credit that beneficence may be powerful as love, even in a bosom where that sorrow has established a throne—let the whole neighbourhood of Lee, lend vigour to their faith, even if it cannot animate their virtue.*

* Nor, even in an age that is marked by wedded infidelity, must this be considered as a solitary instance of the unabated love, that not seldom in this country survives the life of its object—nor need we confine such demonstration of attachment to this example of the widow bewailing her Lord. An equal tribute of constancy has recently been paid, —as I am informed, while this Work is at press—by a husband lamenting his wife, the late Countess of KERRY; and never did any one carry with her to the grave more general regret, or more universal esteem. For the profound affliction of the Earl there is no language. A simple monument, as an emblem of the simplicity which formed a part of her living character, is to be erected over her tomb in St. Andrew's chapel, Westminster-Abbey, on which is to be placed the following inscription :

“ To the affectionately beloved and honoured memory of ANASTATIA, Countess of KERRY, who departed this life on

the 9th, and was deposited here on the 18th day of April, 1799. Her most afflicted husband, FRANCIS THOMAS, Earl of KERRY, whom she rendered, during 31 years, the happiest of mankind, not only by an affection which was bounded only by her love for her God, and to which there never was a single moment's interruption, but also by the practice of the purest religion and piety, of charity and benevolence, of truth and sincerity, of the sweetest and most angelic meekness and simplicity, and of every virtue that can adorn the human mind, has placed this inscription to bear testimony of his gratitude to her, of his admiration of her innumerable virtues, and of his most tender and affectionate love for her. Intending (when it shall please God to release him from his misery, and call him from this world) to be deposited with her here in the same coffin. And hoping that his merciful God will consider the severe blow which it has pleased his Divine Will to inflict upon him, in taking from him the dearest, the most beloved, the most charming, and the most faithful and affectionate companion that ever blessed man, together with the weight of his succeeding sorrows, as an expiation of his past offences; and that he will grant him his grace so to live as that he may, through his Divine Mercy, and through the precious intercession of our blessed LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, hope for the blessing of being soon united with her in eternal happiness."

In every line of this effusion, the lover, husband and widower are manifest, and shew themselves so much superior to all set forms of expression, all study about the construction of sentiments,—the very redundancies and repetitions denoting a melting tenderness, and fervid sincerity,—that the affection and the sorrow may be sworn to as *genuine*: the thoughts and the language equally discover a heart overflowing with grief; and when the mourner marked on the paper his impassioned intention to be deposited with the dear

object of which he was bereaved, I doubt not he would, in that moment, have preferred death to existence, that he might have immediately shared her coffin, could his life have been resigned without offending the SAVIOUR, whose intercession he had invoked. But to whatever extent his days may be lengthened, there is in the whole of this monumental tribute such an earnest of adamantine faith and truth, that if ever the variableness of human nature, and all the circumstances which produce it, can be set at defiance, this, methinks, will be an instance wherein there can be no shadow of changing. And though, perhaps, that fidelity may take, externally, a different shape from that of the fore-mentioned votaress of grief, the principle will be as ardent, as pure, and as immutable.

LETTER IV.

NORTH RUNCTON, NORFOLK,

July 26, 1798.

SURELY the demon of disappointment had fixed my foot, as by a spell! I have been enchained in town another of the lovely months by unyielding circumstances, even till a *few hours* only remained to keep sacred my promise to a family, which resides a hundred miles from the capital.

It may, however, serve as no bad specimen of our English carriages and horses, to mention the speed with which I have been conveyed over the said hundred miles—and, for the most part, during the hours of darkness.

How shall I gain credit from my Continental friends in *general*?—though you, I know, will rely upon the fidelity of my report,—when I desire those who have been accustomed to the

sickly movement of the reluctant wheel over German leagues of absorbing sand—where man, beast and machine—so heavily are they moved along,—appear to be alike torpid—pardon me, my friend—how shall I dare even to *ask* such to believe, that an Englishman may take his seat at nine o'clock of the evening in a common public vehicle of this country—profoundly atmospherical, and constitutionally saturnine, as we have been deemed!—and be rolled, boundingly, over the almost velvet surface of one hundred miles by the corresponding hour of the morning? and *that*,—in comparison of the Dutch, Persian or German stages,—almost without being sensible of any motion at all?

Foreigners, unfamiliar to such luxury, might think that the *feathered* Mercury was conveying them on his own pinion, or flying with them in a chariot of gossamer. Yet this velocity is an ordinary fact, which every man in England can attest; and if a traveller can bear the expence of what we call going post, that is, in one of our post-chaises, more than double—I believe I might venture to say, nearly treble—the num-

ber of miles might be measured in the same space of time.

What ! methinks I hear some of my Continental friends, just unpacked from a German *post waggon*, as you call your stage coaches—*things*, which *you* will soon have the candour to allow, are but very awkward and mis-shapen imitations of our broad-wheel waggon—a huge piece of workmanship made use of to convey sacks, tubs, boxes, barrels, household furniture, and other dead-weight luggage—What ! Monsieur le Baron, would this correspondent of yours attempt to persuade us, his cloudy countrymen are whirled in their *airy chariots* at this rate ? then may we believe that Phaëton did, *indeed*, assail the regions of the Sun, and that the winged steeds of Apollo, and of Jove himself, are outstripped by the public stage-coaches,* and post-chaises of Great Britain !

* Attend to what one of your own countrymen, the liberal and good-humoured MORITZ, who performed a *pedestrian* journey of a few weeks through several parts of our island in 1782 : and which is preserved in DR. MAJOR's valuable compendium of the most celebrated *British Tourists*,

I make all possible allowance, my dear Baron, for this incredulity on your side of the great gulph that separates us: and though every joint of me has often borne witness to the truth—the aching truth of my assertion—when, in, or after, a long, sad, solemn, slow and dizzy drag, from one town to another, across the tracts of almost Arabian sands—not to say desarts, of some parts

a candid and elegant selection, which shall go to you with my full commendation.

“ Our little party, says Mr. Moritz, now got into two *post-chaises*. These carriages are very neat, and lightly built, so that you hardly perceive their motion, as they roll along the firm smooth roads; they have windows in front, and on both sides. The horses are generally good, and the postillions particularly smart and active, and always ride on a full trot. A thousand charming spots and beautiful landscapes, on which my eye would long have dwelt with rapture, were now rapidly passed with the speed of an arrow.”

Mr. Moritz's succeeding remarks are extremely natural and amiable. “ Our road,” continues he, “ appeared to be undulatory: and our journey, like the journey of life, seemed to be a pretty regular alternation of up hill and down, and here and there it was diversified with copses and woods: the majestic Thames every now and then, like a little forest of masts, rising to our view, and anon losing itself among the delightful towns and villages.”

of the Continent, I must own I have been able to endure it only by the promise of finding better things at the end of them—a promise which, I confess, has been amply performed. Yet I will be content, even by you, my candid friend, to be thought a prejudiced reporter, till you have tried the assertion here advanced, and confirmed it.

In the mean while, I hazard nothing by observing, that—though it is certainly a peculiar remark—had we no attraction except our Roads to draw foreigners to England, they would be well paid for their journey by the voluptuous novelty of passing from one extremity of the island to the other, in our little portable parlours, and wheeled drawing-rooms, with an ease, expedition and elegance, of which no other people in Europe can offer—of which, indeed, they cannot conceive even an idea.

Into one of these public vehicles, then, but into one on the last, best principle of improvement, I was carried along a public road, after evening tea;—over which, had not my mind been otherwise occupied, I might have toyed

with a book, or played with the tea-spoon, in contemplation or vacancy;—and yet, without any apparent hurry, and no confusion, I was ready to meet the birth-day friends at a villa, more than a hundred miles distant from London! In truth, almost as soon as the sun gilded the anniversary with his beams; too soon even for a rural breakfast, and by half a day too early for a well-bred town *dejeuner*; and in repetition, I must desire you not to forget, that I began my journey while that blessed orb was yet cheering my path with his setting beams.

It is from that villa, then, I now address you in the language of our MONARCH BARD,* whom, when you come better to understand than any foreigner seems yet to have done—and I know it is one of the motives of your intended residence amongst us so to do—you will, I am persuaded, feel, *poetically* speaking,

* It is scarce necessary to tell even foreigners, I mean Shakspeare.

to be—the *Sovereign* not only of Great Britain, but of the great globe itself.—In *his* language, I must,

——“Humbly pray you
To o’erleap the space between, and to admit
The excuse of time, and of due course of things,
Which cannot, in the huge and proper life
Be now presented; since I thus have flown
In motion of scarce less celerity
Than that of Thought.”

My engagement was sacred, and the great Disposer only left me time to keep it holy, even with the aid of *British STEEDS, British ROADS, and British CONVEYANCES*,—three of our great public characteristics, each commanding honourable notice.

It is indeed, no way important, as to what part of the county we first begin with, it being your design to visit *all* parts; and you will remember that I stand engaged to give accounts only of *particular places*—taking care, however, that those which I describe, shall present to you the best sketches I *can* give or find; and

pointing out to you in these etchings* where you may see the pictures at full length.

* I will not, however, refuse you a list of the towns which form the regular tracts from LONDON to LYNN, the only town of note bordering in this part of Norfolk, in case you should pass them in day-light, in the meditative way I should myself have used, had I not been governed, at my setting out, by uncontrollable circumstances.

And this turnpike-road intelligence is ready cut and dried for you in at least as many books as there are miles betwixt London and Lynn. I shall, however, borrow from the Roadist deemed the most accurate; and whose information is as follows :—

LONDON

Mile-End

Bow

Stratford

Laytonstone

Snarebrook

Woodford

Woodford-Wells

Bald-Stag

EPPING

} Middlesex.

Potter's-Street

HARLOW

Sawbridgeworth

Bishop's-Storford

} Hertfordshire.

I can scarce form any idea of what a sensible foreigner must feel on his first view of the

Stanstead	}	Essex.
Quendon		
Newport		
Littlebury		
Chesterford		

Bournbridge	}	Cambridgeshire.
Devil's-Ditch		
NEWMARKET		

Red-House	}	Suffolk.
BARTON-MILLS		
Hobbs's-Cross		
Brandon		

Methwold	}	Norfolk.
Stoke-Ferry		
Wareham		
Seeching		
West-Winch		
Hardwick		
LYNN		

Some of these will come within the proposed path of my observation on my return; and such as do not, will deserve to be made in yours, because there is not one of them, which, in the months most favourable to excursion, will not offer something for the curiosity, pleasure, improvement, or admiration of a sensible traveller. But, as I think, meagre descriptions far worse than no descriptions at all, I shall

various novelties which are obvious even on the *surface* of England: To a German, Dutch,

only select one or two prominent points of remark, to serve for memoranda, as you pause to examine; or should you pass rapidly, that you may not entirely *overlook*, or run by them.

The noble and extensive Forest of EPPING, will have a charm for the lover of nature—for you, my Friend, in every tree, in every bush; and the lover of art will see fair reason to be pleased with the many splendid villas and elegant cottages, interspersed about and within it.—The word cottage, is now used a little proudly, if not affectedly, to signify the very beautiful, and frequently the very superb, residence of *cottagers*, who carry the splendours of the town into even *such* recesses of the country, as make Nature hide her blushing GRACES amidst her own roses, or seek a modest refuge, and lie concealed in some green dell of her forest upon a simple sod; as if fearful of setting her timid foot on the flaunting, garish carpets of her ostentatious rival. EPPING FOREST, was granted by Edward the Confessor, to his favourite Randolph Pepper, afterwards called Peverell; who, it is said, having a beautiful lady for his wife, William the Conqueror fell in love with her, and soon proved himself the lady's conqueror, for the hero had a son by her, and called him William Peverell. But heroes, you know, have not time to spare for the conquest of themselves;—the public good, no doubt, they think a kind of set-off against private wrong:—or, do these mighty ones, find it easier to subdue the great globe itself, than to regulate the little world in their own bosoms? *There*, a maiden of fifteen, if she be well-born and chastely

or French traveller, it must certainly seem an *original* land; because it is in many respects altogether dissimilar from what either of them *can* have seen on their native shores, or, indeed, any where else. The agriculture, the gardening, the natural and artificial arrangements, the vegetation, and numberless productions both of the fancy, the spirit, and the genius, are peculiar. Instead of stately rows of trees, awful and equidistant, in the straight line, and a level of many an unvaried league that fatigues the eye—and a stony ridge in the middle of the

educated, even if she has a strong, but pure passion in her heart, and, perhaps, its first love, has more self-government and virtue than a thousand such conquerors.

AUDLEY END, near WALDEN, will gratify your love of architectural antiquity, and your admiration of nature, whose charms are ever young, were you to give it a whole day's attention and homage. The villa, called SHORTGROVE, at about forty miles from London, occupied by Mr. WYNDHAM, has for its owner one of the first men of our island, whether he be considered as an English nobleman, a relative, or a friend—the EARL of EGREMONT. And *Mark-Hall*, near Potter's-Street, is, or was lately, the seat of one of the LUSHINGTON'S—a family, which, on account of its integrity, might be shewn to foreigners amongst the worthies of the land.

highway, with sandy, sinking slopes on each side,—which, though canopied with aspiring foliage, and displaying an air of gothic grandeur, amusing and imposing at first, soon weary by their uniformity, and by the heavy hours we are constrained to pass in the sad sepulchral vehicles, that “drag their slow length along,”—instead of these, a traveller no sooner recovers the dizziness of passing the water, than all at once, he finds himself, in almost every part of the island, transported as it were, to a new region, where every object must have the effect of a magical illusion. In an almost flying car, he is lightly and rapidly borne on a smooth expanse, to the summit of a flowery, fertile hill, or down the soft declivities of a valley,—the horse-path usually social enough to admit three or four, and sometimes as many carriages abreast; all running, as we call it, bowlingly on the nail, with scarce a pebble in the way—on a fine gravel which binds to the firmness, and, even in the first trading country in the world, almost preserves the beauty of a garden-walk, without one dislocating rut. The foot-

paths, he perceives, are either across cultivated pastures or corn-grounds, or through clustering thickets, or by woods of more ambitious extent, and yet not sufficiently deep and continuous to be dreary.—Such farms and cottages too, as the sons of Industry and Toil can rarely boast in any other land, are seen springing up to cheer his progress betwixt village and village, town and town; and then each side of him even in the public highway, he is presented with either an entertaining, or a rich variety, by the innumerable and rapid turnings of the path, forming a complete contrast to the ceremonious foliage of the road-side scenery of the Continent. There, you know, the solemn firs are often drawn up like grenadiers at roll-call, or a more formidable troop of giants, standing as perpendicular, and at measured spaces as if they had been drilled, just in the style of our old English Barons, when they stalked in their buckram and brocade to pay their court to his, or her, Majesty of England. To say truth, like our own scenery in those days of stateliness, when our gardens exhibited birds,

beasts and fishes in evergreen—gigantic avenues of forest oaks *all in a row*—entrenchments of rampart-looking ditches and mantling moats—and dreadful drawbridges — and embattled halls, and turreted abbeys—all of them duly haunted—a ghost-room and an apparition in each—the very gates and walls bespeaking power, and frowning defiance. In short, when Nature herself, instead of the * liberal and graceful freedom with which we now array her, was forced into stilts.

Those were the days, my dear Baron, when even our English roads were,—wonderful to tell,—more impassable than the worst of yours ! when our communications with each other, whether by epistolary or personal intercourse, were encumbered by so many delays and difficulties, that had not most of the movements

* Nature, (says the fascinating Goldsmith) is now followed with greater assiduity than formerly ;—the trees are suffered to shoot out into the utmost luxuriance ; the streams no longer forced from their native beds, are permitted to wind along the vallies ; spontaneous flowers take place of the finished parterre ; and the enamelled meadow of the shaven green.

of those times been solemn and slow, the feelings, in certain cases—cases of separation, for instance, from a beloved object—must have in every desperate effort, hazarded the neck of the enamoured youth, who doubtless would have preferred a dislocated limb, or a broken bone, to a broken heart—the proper death, nevertheless, of absent lovers.

More seriously, however, to speak—before the grand public work of our turnpike roads, a journey of a hundred miles, was an affair of such peril and protraction, that it was deemed prudent for a sober-minded man to make some very solemn arrangements in his family concerns before he set out; nor, after all, was this formidable undertaking entered upon without the parties about to separate taking leave of each other, as if they were, probably, never to meet again.

How, then, can I expect credit for our unrivalled improvements in the art of travelling?—improvements which would stagger the belief of any of our forefathers, and make them suppose themselves under some illusion of the

senses, and disbelieve their own eyes, were they suddenly to become spectators?

I cannot yet close this great national object, which is amongst the very first to attract and to astonish a foreigner. The *perfection* of that object is yet to be mentioned. I mean the invention of our Mail Coaches,* which increase

* Among the many aids which have been given to commerce and public convenience, during the present century, there is not one which deserves better of the nation, and has a more just title to a place in this work, than the reformation which has been made in the administration of the Post-Office, by Mr. Palmer. Some general ideas of the reform, which has since taken place, were first suggested to Mr. Pitt, in the Autumn of 1782; and, in the beginning of the following year, a plan was laid before him. After having maturely considered it, the Minister determined that it should undergo a trial. This original plan, which, though it has since been greatly improved, contains all the principles of the undertaking, and in its present state of perfection, is a curious and interesting memoir. In order to give a general outline of this extensive undertaking, I have made such selections from the plan presented by Mr. Palmer to Mr. Pitt, in 1783, as will be sufficient for that purpose.

“The post at present, (observes Mr. Palmer,) instead of being the swiftest, is almost the slowest conveyance in this country; and though, from the great improvement in our

the accommodation and speed of every thing most valuable, and most precious to the busi-

roads, other carriers have proportionably mended their speed, the post is as slow as ever. It is likewise very unsafe, as the frequent robberies of it testify; and, to avoid a loss of this nature, people generally cut bank bills, or bills at sight, in two, and send the parts by different posts.

“The Postmasters General lately advertised directions to the public, how to divide a bill, in such a manner as to prevent its being of any use to the robber. Rewards have also been frequently offered for the best constructed mail cart, on some plan, to prevent the frequent robbery of the mail, but without effect. Indeed, it is at present generally intrusted to some idle boy, without character, mounted on a worn-out hack; and who, so far from being able to defend himself, or escape from a robber, is much more likely to be in league with him.”

The post should certainly be as safe and expeditious as any other regular stage in the kingdom; for, till it is so, whatever penalties are held out to coachmen, carrying parcels, the public, as their convenience directs, will send by the safest and most expeditious conveyance, to the very great loss of the revenue of the Post-Office.

The comparison betwixt the post and the diligences, from Bath to London, will pretty nearly serve for the whole kingdom. The diligence that sets out from Bath, at four or five on Monday afternoon, will deliver a letter about ten on Tuesday morning, while the post that leaves the same place at ten or eleven on Monday night, does not deliver a letter till two or three on Wednesday afternoon, and frequently much later. Nothing, therefore, prevents the post

ness and pleasure of this illustrious Island, almost to a winged celerity. In the days of

from losing the conveyance of many more letters than it does at present, but the cheapness of the carriage, when compared with that of the diligence. By the post a letter costs only four-pence; and by the diligence, booking, carriage and portage, will make the charge amount to about two shillings; nevertheless, many persons, both at Bath and Bristol, send by the latter; and indeed, throughout the kingdom, every letter to which expedition is necessary, is now sent by diligences, where they are established. It is, therefore, advised to contract with the masters of these diligences to carry the mail, and a guard to protect it; and this, it is presumed, may be done by them not only better, but as cheap as the present method, which in general is three-pence per mile for the boy and horse. The diligences should go at the rate of eight or nine miles an hour; so that, allowing a quarter of an hour to change the horses, and for each Postmaster to change the bags, the mail will be conveyed from Bath to London in sixteen hours. Besides, these machines would have a recommendation above all others, both for passengers and parcels, as they would be punctual to time, and be protected by a guard, which must prove an additional motive for the masters to contract the cheaper with Government.

“Diligences are now established from almost every town in the kingdom to London, and in many cities and capital towns where the cross-post communicates, as from Bath and Bristol to Birmingham, Liverpool, Chester, Oxford, Exeter, Plymouth, Portsmouth, &c. which would be a great benefit

our ancestors—nay, within the memory of many persons still living, one relative who should

to the cross-posts ; and in many places, where they are not yet established, a contract for the mail might induce people to do it.

“ If the diligence was free of turnpikes, it would be a great saving to Government, and a very trifling tax on tolls, which, for a carriage and pair, from Bath to London, is about nine shillings, and a carriage and four, eighteen, it would be so much towards payment of the carriage of the mail ; and, taken all through the kingdom, must amount to a very large sum annually.

“ It is certainly a very great hardship on individuals, that they are liable to an heavy penalty on sending letters by diligences, &c. as they may go out at an hour when the post does not, and at a time when a letter requires dispatch ; yet several pounds must be paid for an express, or a servant sent post to do what may be done much better, for half a crown, by the coach. All that Government wants is to secure the postage of any letter, not sent with parcels of goods, or by private hands. The great object, therefore, must be to carry cheaper, safer and swifter, than any other carrier, and that will secure the business to the Post-Office better than any penalties whatever.

“ The Postmaster of every town must know the exact time the mail should arrive, and either himself, or servant, be ready at the inn, where the horses change, with his packet of letters, to put in the general bag, and to take out those brought for him. He must be very inexpert indeed, if he cannot change his packets, as soon as the ostler does his horses. If he is not ready, the diligence by no means to

have summoned another to his bed of sickness, might have died even a lingering death, without

wait. If, on inquiry, the salaries of officers are not proportioned to the trust and duty, Government will undoubtedly advance them, but no more keep a negligent servant in a department of the Post-Office, than in the Excise.

“ As the hours of sending off the mails, from every office in the kingdom, are settled to accommodate the General Post-Office, by the proposed alterations they may, perhaps, be changed in most places: to some the alteration may prove convenient, to others inconvenient; yet, at the very worst, the consideration, that the letter, which may be sent on the morrow, will arrive at the place to which it is directed, as soon as one now sent to-day, will far overbalance it.

“ A Committee of Gentlemen, Merchants, &c. in each town, might, perhaps, suggest a better method of regulating the post, for their own district, than persons always employed in the office in London. Some intelligent out-riders, who travel for orders to the different parts of the kingdom, and have experienced inconvenience in their correspondence, would be likely to furnish very useful information, which the office should not fail to encourage from every quarter. Where new roads are continually forming, and manufacturing villages growing into large towns, the post of such a country must be liable to continual variation, and open to great improvement.

“ It may be advisable to consult with the Merchants, &c. in London, how far it may be proper for the General Office to shut at seven or eight in the evening. The 'Change being shut up at three, and the Bankers' shops at six, the business would be much better done than at twelve at night, or one

the friend most relied on to close his eye, or to receive of that eye, *its* last love-beam: the heart,

or two in the morning, and cheaper to Government. On examination, perhaps, it may be so regulated, that the letters may be delivered so much earlier than they are at present, as to leave full as much time, after the receipt of the letter, to answer it, as there is now, though the post would go out earlier. The encreased expedition of the post would also allow for the missing a day. Indeed, an early hour, at the office, would occasion earlier hours for the dispatch of business that is to be communicated by it.

“ It is presumed that, by these, and other improvements which may be made, letters might be delivered in nearly half the time they now are, from many parts of the kingdom; and, as the public pay an additional tax with less reluctance, when it is grounded on great improvement and convenience, the postage might be advanced in the proportion of six-pence for four-pence, but double and treble letters in a smaller degree; for, as the diligence can carry any weight of letters, every encouragement should be given to send small packets by the post; and, as Government would pay about three-halfpence a pound, for one hundred miles, the public should not be made to pay one shilling and four-pence by the ounce.

“ By the act of 1765, the postage of a single letter, which used to be three-pence for any distance under eighty miles, was altered to one penny for one stage, and two-pence for two stages, under the idea that, by doing it so cheap, Government would have the great number of letters sent by carriers, &c. in preference to them, not considering that they were sent for expedition, not for cheapness. By the present regulation of the prices of postage, from the General

condemned by some stern necessity to throb alone, far distant from its associate, might,

Post-Office, a single letter is a penny for one stage, two-pence for two stages; any distance beyond that, and not exceeding eighty miles, three-pence. From eighty miles to any part of England, be the distance what it may, even Berwick-upon-Tweed, which is three hundred miles, only four-pence; so that, beyond eighty miles, there is no sort of proportion kept between the distance and the charge, though to Edinburgh the charge is six-pence. Letters, which pass through London, are charged the postage to London, and from thence to the place of its destination.

“ The American charge seems to be on a better plan than that in England, viz. For a single letter, above sixty miles, four-pence; above one hundred, six-pence; above two hundred, eight-pence; not above three hundred, ten-pence, &c. Suppose the charges, in future, were at the following rates, throughout Great Britain, viz. A single letter, not exceeding twenty miles, two-pence; forty, three-pence; sixty, four-pence; eighty, five-pence; one hundred, six-pence; and after that an additional halfpenny, on every twenty miles, to and from any part, whether the letter passes through London, or not.

“ The gross receipt of the Post Office annually, from the time it was first established in the reign of Charles II. to the act passed by Queen Anne for its improvement, gradually increased to 111,461*l.* and is now supposed to be about 500,000*l.*

“ From the proposed and other improvements, the revenue would not only be increased to a very considerable amount, but the public be better accommodated. Some regulation

indeed, have been broken, long before the balmy comfort of affection could have

might also be adopted with respect to the privilege of franking. Perhaps, the best check on abuses in this particular, would be to oblige the members of Parliament to write the day of the month and year on the frank, and to charge the letter if not sent to the office the day it is so dated.

“Postage is really no tax, but a fair and reasonable price for so much labour, which Government, by its monopoly, is enabled to do cheaper than any individuals, and should do with greater expedition and safety, or submit to the loss of the public's employing other carriers in preference to theirs.”

This plan, which has since been adopted, in its material points, with so much success, was necessarily delayed by the changes which took place in the administration of the country. Though it should be mentioned, to the honour of Mr. Palmer, that his scheme of reformation was approved by all parties; and that the several Ministers, as they succeeded each other, gave every proper encouragement to him. The difficulty he found in executing his plan did not proceed from Government, but from the Post Office; from whence, indeed, he experienced a degree of opposition which it is not necessary to mention in the detail, and on which I shall only observe, that it does not appear, upon the most favourable examination, to be reconcileable to any principle of common sense, policy, or integrity. At length, however, the ability, ingenuity, and indefatigable spirit of the present Comptroller General, under the protecting wisdom of the present Minister, has brought this undertaking to a very

been supplied, even by those who think, with the Poet, that "a Friend is worth all hazards we can run;" and a thousand advantages in public, with ten thousand endearments in private life, are facilitated and con-

high degree of perfection, and has given an example of public œconomics which never before existed in this or any other country.

Of the present state of this most useful undertaking I have to observe from the best information, that Mr. Palmer has more than fulfilled every engagement he made with government. The contracts for the conveyance of the mails are made at 20,000*l.* per annum less than was originally agreed for;—the acceleration and extension of the posts are far greater than were at first promised, the mails being now conveyed, not only in half the time they used to be, to most parts of the kingdom, but in one-third, and even one-fourth of the time in many of the cross posts;—these posts are all likewise made daily instead of three days per week to 320 towns, and likewise the same additional convenience given to 201 towns on the general posts.

Thus has Mr. Palmer, to the very great and acknowledged advantage of the whole kingdom, given accelerated expedition, perfect security, an assured punctuality, and an increased revenue to the administration of the British General Post Office. Mr. Palmer has, at this time, I understand, a petition in Parliament for their fulfilment of their agreement, as to two and an half per centage.—I enter into no Post Office disputes, but I think, and the country thinks with me, the projector of so extensive a national good cannot easily be over-rewarded.

nected with this interesting and noble invention. It is, in fine, the crown both of our commerce and correspondence—and were temples now built, or monuments erected to those who, by public works have expanded public good; while the benefactors are yet living, I know not of any man more deserving a mark of his country's gratitude than he who conceived, and carried into practice, this great national idea. It deserves the emulation and adoption of every other clime, that has but a relish of business, or of social love; and next to the project of any post at all, and the invention of writing, to confide thereto the secrets of our hearts, and our most important worldly concerns, the establishment of a MAIL COACH IN ENGLAND will be honourably recorded.

The present has been the first opportunity of shewing my gratitude to it as an individual; and I do it heartily;—for though it cannot literally,

“ Waft a sigh from Indus to the Pole,”

nor convey my affectionate wishes from the

British to the German empire,—the salt sea, and many a frowning league of dry land dividing us—it will convey this Letter to the confine of the ocean, where, I hope, the most favourable wind “will kiss the sails to make the vessel,” which is to take charge of it, “nimble;” and it enables me to inform you of a luxury, that will not only smooth, but speed your way to the hand of, yours affectionately.

P. S. I ought not to have forgotten what I farther owe to the Mail-Coach on the score of bearing me to this flower-encircled villa, which is situated in the midst of a garden, and where I found every face and heart so happy to receive me, that the wishes which filled my heart overflowed in the following spontaneous address, which, if it breathe not of Poetry, is replete with truth, and on that sacred ground, you will allow me to preserve it in our correspondence.

PARENT of Fancy! Muse adored! the art
Of fair imagining is thine; and thine
The power, more awful and sublime, of Her
Whose inspiration is from Heav'n itself,
Celestial TRUTH!—O woo her then to raise,

Ev'n to the *source* of ev'ry good, my strain,
 That thence may stream on each revolving day
 That gave to Earth, one of Heaven's fairest works,
 Fairest and best—a benediction pure,
 Ev'n as the soul for which I form the pray'r!
 And may the blessing reach to all who love
 What is most lovely: grant it **GOD of GODS!**

LETTER V.

NORTH RUNCTON,

July 19, 1798.

ALTHOUGH I have repeatedly renounced all methodical movements, and set out with a design of furnishing you with a *general idea* of my country, derived from a description of particular places and people, I am desirous that no material objects should be left unnoticed, which, in a particular manner, *distinguishes* the Island, in its present state, and may assist you in forming a right notion of us.

Hence, I should, methinks, have incorporated with my last Letter, respecting the ROADS and CARRIAGES, some information as to the good things to which those Roads will lead you.

And here again, my dear Baron, I am constrained, by the truth which you venerate, to assign the Palm to Old England—by an unqualified preference of the INNS of this Country

to those either of Germany, France, or, any other nation in the world; and to do away all appearance of partiality herein, I will boldly appeal for attestation of this judgment to every inhabitant, in that world, who has had opportunity of proving its unbiassed equity, by living amongst us; and of making fair comparisons. Ere you have gone over as much of our ground as from London to this place, I will confidently make the appeal to you, my Friend. The *reality* of a comfort, of which other countries have scarcely an *idea*, will be visible to you at the first English Inn, where you may stop, and accompany you to the end of your journey.—The warmth, the neatness, the attention, the attendance; the *propreté* of the apartments, the cleanliness of the food, the polish of the furniture, of the plate, and of the glasses,—these will *always* strike you, and not unfrequently, the *elegance* of the rooms, and *splendour* of the accommodation. Every foreigner, who has either taste or feeling, must candidly give the precedence to us in all these articles.—Indeed, the comparisons which a *travelled* visitant, from

your own shores *must* make, would be more victorious for us than any eulogy of our own. Englishmen are so much in the habit of seeing these things in all parts of this country,—with very few exceptions indeed,—that they are scarcely seen at all; or noticed only by the indignant manner in which we mark the exceptions—a dirty, disgusting Inn, fitted up for *les gens comme il faut*, being as rare to be met on English ground as it is common on the Continent. There, indeed, we occasionally see a dismantled castle, or dilapidated *chateau*, degraded to a cheerless road-side public-house, where men, horses, hogs and other cattle, house, stable, stall and sty, on the same floor; and, to say truth, the beast has often the best birth. Huge rooms, beds shabbily sumptuous, a kind of majesty in tatters, long chill passages, damp floors, high dingy cielings, and unwieldy figures in tapestry, where the spider, as in mockery, drawing kings and warriors into his web, sits brooding his venom in the ruined face of a Princess, or makes his den on the bosom of a Queen in decay! But where shall we

find the triumphant enjoyments which the Writer, with whose acute remark, rich diction, and unrivalled morality, you will in due time, I trust, be better acquainted, where, I say, shall we find those home-felt public luxuries which our Samuel Johnson so often considered as one of the grand domestic *perfections* of his country, an English Inn or Tavern?—the presidential chair of which, upon account of the unrestrained ease and freedom it bestows, he gaily called, “*the throne of human felicity.*” “As soon,” said he, “as I enter the door of a tavern I experience an oblivion of care, and a freedom from solicitude; when I am seated, I find the master courteous, and the servants obsequious to my call; anxious to know, and ready to supply my wants. Wine then exhilarates my spirits, and prompts me to free conversation, and an interchange of discourse with those whom I most love. There is no private house in which people can enjoy themselves so well as a capital tavern.” But he must be understood, my dear Baron, to mean an ENGLISH tavern; because the circumstances that constitute that enjoyment, can, in their per-

fection, he found no where else ; and not only in our capital taverns, but in almost every well-regulated inn upon the road, in every possible direction of the country, and he might have added, there only am I regaled by decency, as a hand-maid, waiting on appetite—there only are the eyes, taste, and touch at once banquetted ! And this is true, not only of our capital inns, but of other houses of accommodation on a more circumscribed scale. Most of our villages, and almost every stage, have to boast their full share of the like attracting properties, and it is very seldom, indeed, that our “ Golden Fleece,” “ Fair Lamb,” “ White Lion,” “ Black Bull,” or even “ Blue Boar,” hold out a sign that, when we accept their invitation, we shall find ourselves disappointed. And all this awaits you at a moment’s warning. Your carriage no sooner stops than it is surrounded by alert attendants, who *measure* you, even as they hold the obsequious arm to assist your descent, and almost by an intuitive glance, know, by the step and voice of a traveller, be the disguise of dress what it may—for we have many men of property who affect to be

slovens—what are his pretensions, with as much accuracy as if he had settled them at the Herald's Office, or St. James's. From the instant you are *ascertained*, the motion of your eye is arbitrary, your temper is vested with supreme authority, and your very nod has the *fiat* of Jove's. The signs of wealth, no doubt, will, in *all* countries, make certain distinctions in the courtesy of people who live by it, and it is very difficult for those signs to be concealed, either by affected humility on the one hand, or by assumed poverty on the other. PROPERTY in every country where it is an object of importance, and where is it not such? discovers itself in despite of every counterfeiting, and one of our adroit English waiters, who, as I before observed, takes the dimensions of your quality, while, with a kind of unobserved observation, he is conducting you from your chaise into a room, could no more mistake a man of property for a needy person, because he might travel in a rusty wig, sloucht hat, or thread-bare coat, than he could conceive an adventurer to be a man of property, from seeing him rush from

the carriage in tawdry habiliments. Plenty and indigence, from a certain habitual consciousness, which they can neither of them put on or off with their cloaths, betray themselves in a very short time, and literally, in the case we are now stating, *he who runs* may read them. Not that you are to infer from hence that the landlords of our inns and taverns, or the people in their train, are attentive only to rank and riches—though these will, in all societies, be allowed their privileges, even were they not insisted on—a ready hand, a smiling countenance, a brisk step, and a chearful room are offered to all degrees of passengers, with as few surly exceptions, as in a rule so broad and general, can be imagined—and every foreigner would feel in a single half hour, let him have come from whatever part of the world he might, that he was in England, and that he could be only in an English tavern.

Doctor Johnson, indeed, gave some reasons, besides those above quoted, for his preference of a tavern life, not so immediately in support of my arguments in our favour; and yet related with so much glee and sincerity, when his mind

and fancy were in tune, that I will here transcribe them into a NOTE* for your amusement, either at the moment you have read this passage, or any other that may better suit you.

And now, my friend, having promised you the best *horses*, the best *carriages*, and the best *roads*, we will see what you have to expect from some of the *places* to which they will convey you: and in confirmation of what we asserted in the letter that opened our correspondence—

* “Let there be ever so great plenty of good things, ever so much grandeur, ever so much elegance, ever so much desire,” says our Doctor, “that every one should be easy in a private house, in the nature of things it cannot be: there must always be some degree of care and anxiety. The master of the house is *anxious* to entertain his guests; the guests are *anxious* to be agreeable to him: and no man, but a very impudent dog indeed, can as freely command what is in another man’s house, as if it were his own. Whereas, at a tavern, there is a general freedom from anxiety. You are sure you are welcome; and the more noise you make, the more trouble you give, the more good things you call for, the welcomer you are. No servants will attend you with the alacrity which waiters do, who are incited by the prospect of an immediate reward in proportion as they please. No, Sir; there is nothing which has yet been contrived by man, by which so much happiness is produced as by a good tavern or inn.”

that—"were we only to follow the falling stick, it could not point to barren ground," we may take our first views of the country, as it happens to lie before us, from the place of address.

NORTH RUNCTON, situated exactly an hundred miles from London, and three short ones from Lynn, in Norfolk, is one of the numberless unassuming villages, which ensures attention, though it aspires not to admiration. The scenery around is soft, agreeable, and engaging: the peasantry wholesome, and healthy, the yeomanry diligent, ingenious, and at their ease, and the neighbourhood respectable; yet the village itself, though too "low for a high praise, is too high for a low praise," can boast only two families which are termed independent gentry, that of Mr. Lane, who has another garden-encompassed villa, and the friends of whom I am at present a guest. But you will here find, if you allow yourself time, a very interesting specimen of those unambitious beauties of nature with which this country abounds, and which not only give an

idea of content, but tend to produce the *reality* of it in the beholder. The more obvious prospects maintain the character I have already given them; and if you will follow my usual custom of quitting, occasionally, the open to see what the covert yields, you will be recompensed by those retiring graces, which lie embowered amidst leaves and blossoms in our sequestered scenes: long green lanes, various foliage over-arching them; the hedges, at intervals, interspersed with trees of irregular height and bulk, deriving charms even from their confusion; some bending with age over the path of the traveller, as if for his pity and support, some standing firm, as if in the pride and independence of youth, their vernal heads erect in air, and seeming to brave the lightning which, I observe, has left a shattered oak, in the same hedge-row, without a green leaf, to shew that it had ever vegetated. These will all repay you for the humility of an unostentatious walk, embalmed too by the wild fragrance of roses and woodbines, blooming about your walk, through a diversity of mazes, now so alcocked

by nature as scarce to admit the penetrating sun-beams of this radiant season, and now opening upon you the unbroken day, and the sublime orb from whence it springs.

Then the enclosures, the rustic stiles leading into them, the foot-paths, direct or in windings, conducting to innumerable little farms and cots, unmarked by the high-road Traveller who can never know either the prosperity or population of his country, one half of which is hid like the violets, amidst the lowliest glens, and humblest scenery.

This pleasant village leads by one of the enviable public roads, I have recently described, to LYNN; before, however, we proceed to which, it may be clearing our way, as we go, to present you with some general character of this county, the largest proportion of which, is said to lie West and North-West of NORWICH: but the part at which we begin our correspondence is called West-Norfolk, and on account of several advantages, in due time to be explained, is by far the most auspicious to a traveller at this season of the year.

Were you to consult all the books which have been written on NORFOLK, a year's assiduous reading would scarcely bring you to the end of them; for, besides Domsday-book, the mighty fountain of our English annals, you would have to wade through the copious channels of DUGDALE, SPEED, SPELMAN, PARAGE, CAMDEN, KENT, BLOOMFIELD, PARKINS, SWINDEN, MACKRIL, MARTIN, BROWNE, and many other streams of intelligence; in doing which, it would be well if Patience, Memory, and Truth herself, are not drowned. The histories of Norfolk, says a sensible Tourist, and of its principal towns, are comprised in so many folios, quartos, and books of all sizes, as, collectively, are too voluminous and expensive, and several of them too scarce to be easily procured. These, amongst other reasons, induced the Observer to compress into as small a compass as possible, an epitome of what seemed most worthy of particular notice, and he has accordingly performed the task with good effect in a work, which he calls, "the Norfolk Tour;" and by occasional

reference to which, I shall rescue you from a useless and overwhelming labour. Indeed, a judicious selection from the time-consuming mass, as to the brick and mortar, baptismal and burial, post-road, parochial history of each county, is become a *desideratum* to the traveller, and will answer to him a much better purpose than the dreary and torpid detail of fiefs, beruites, &c. &c. and though you will always hear less from me of, who was in fee, or demi-fee, whether the antipathies, or the affections of the descendants, struck them *out* of the family, or kept the regular line *in* it; than you will what is now actually to be seen or heard; what is the face of the country, and the feature, moral and personal, of the existing inhabitants—a more interesting sort of information, except to curiosity-hunters and antiquarian compilers, than you could derive from the most minute intelligence, to be extracted from those unwieldy reporters, who, however, have their use, when a man is at home in his library, but are the worst heavy luggage abroad that a traveller can take with him, either in his head or his portmanteau:

Indeed, without sending them forward in a baggage waggon, in which the details of this single county would make no slight figure, there would be no taking them at all; and then they would be found such dead weight, that even antiquarians and curiosity-hunters would wish they had left them with the moths on their shelves; though, I say, my dear Baron, you will find me more zealous to give you the living figure, than the dead letter, in continuation of my former plan, I will endeavour to collect, even from these Giants of our Press, as well as from their "brief abstracts," and convey to your mind, clear and accurate accounts, of what, so far as I have the honour to be your Guide, it may be pleasant or useful for you to know.

It seems generally admitted, that Camden's character of Norfolk, though written more than two centuries ago, will, in most of the features that distinguish it, be found a true likeness at this moment: that the soil is more various than that of any other county of England, comprehending all the sorts that are to be found in

the island; arable, pasture, meadow, woodlands, light sandy grounds, deep clays, heaths and fens. The agriculture of the country has received such astonishing improvements, since the time of the above writer, that the scene immediately before the eye, will exhibit every thing to you in the most rich, abundant and favourable light; and although the resemblance of objects are still to be recognized, yet it is as the similitude of a youth, with much of his wildness, much of his rudeness, and most of his unformed awkwardness about him, and the same being, strengthened by time, invigorated by maturity, meliorated by discipline, and fertilized by a wise, wholesome, and improving education, as necessary to the fruits of the earth, in these fallen ages at least, as to the creatures who move upon its surface.

Norfolk, is one of our maritime counties, nearly of an oval form, and so surrounded by water, that except at a small causeway, near Lopham, it is an island. The British Ocean forms its boundary on the North and East for near an hundred miles; on the South it is

divided from Suffolk by the river Waveney and the Little Ouse. According to the Roman divisions, it was part of the *Iceni*; in the Saxon arrangement it made a certain proportion of the East Angles; Ptolemy called it *Simeni*; and the modern name Norfolk, or *Northern-folk*, is, by way of distinction from Suffolk, or the *Southern-folk*. In point of magnitude it has been estimated at about one thirty-fifth part of England; pays, according to Spelman, twenty-two parts of the land-tax raised in Great-Britain; to the poor in *his* time, (of the rising scale of *modern taxation*, we shall have occasion to speak hereafter;) £83,739 4 10; and contains an area of 1,148,000 acres, or 1,793½ square English miles, each being 640 acres. It is divided into 33 hundreds, in which are one city, four burghs, 24 market towns, and about 700 villages; in these are reckoned, 47,780 houses.

To many continental travellers, I am aware, that this will seem as a contracted span of earth in comparison of the scale on which they are able to measure *ground* against us. I

am fully sensible of the *small* spot my fellow-islanders occupy, and that we are limited in point even of cultivated possessions, to less *terra firma* than Germany could very well afford to throw from some of her petty principalities, yea, and feel herself relieved: a few of her long-extended tracts of unyielding sand and heath-grounds, would tell, in point of numbers, against the whole of our landed property. It is not, therefore, most certainly, from diameter or circumference, we can presume to approach *you*, my dear friend, and still less the inhabitants of some other countries. We must submit length and breadth to most of the nations both in and out of Europe; but, in the *use we have made of our little*, * in what-

* "ALBION! o'er thee profusely Nature showers
Her gifts; with livelier verdure decks thy soil
With ev'ry mingled charm of hill and dale,
Mountain or mead, hoar cliff, and forest wide;
And thine the Ruins where rapt Genius broods
In pensive haunts romantic; rifled towers
That beetling o'er the rock, rear the grey crest
Embattled, and within the secret glade

ever most essentially tends to the accommodation, the energies, the comforts, and the genius of man, we may assert with the sacred Writer, that "we have a goodly heritage, and that the lines are fallen to us in pleasant places!" On this text, I remember, long since, to have met with the most interesting arguments to prove, we ought not simply to be content with the *general* dispensations of Providence, but be impressed with particular gratitude for being born in the country which *we* inhabit; and to pour forth the tribute to Him, who is the great benefactor of all the nations of the earth, and the instructor of all the beings who cultivate its productions. My memory retains nothing but what extremely interests my heart; yet my heart itself, must forget all it has appreciated, ere it

Conceal'd the abbey's ivy-mantled pile.

* * * * *

Each silvan scene, mild, or of grace severe,
That charms with loveliest interchange, is thine
O FAVOUR'D ISLE!"

SOOTHEY'S beautiful Poem, through parts of North and South Wales.

loses one trace of the emotions called forth by the sentiments, in the discourse alluded to, which pointed out the *motives* of my gratitude for being a native and inhabitant of Great-Britain. I was infinitely touched by the passage which reminded me, that if it were permitted me to rise so high, as to see from some sublime elevation, all the kingdoms of the earth roll under my eye, I should feel a disposition to prefer, upon the whole, this in which I dwell. I should bless the great Appointer, that my country is not one of those *burning lands*, "*where the heaven over head is brass, and the earth under the feet iron;*" and where the sun rises more like a strong man to destroy, than a bridegroom coming out of his chamber to make men rejoice. Nor yet one of those *frozen* parts of the universe, where the lord of it, reserves his treasures of snow and hail: nor amongst those dreadful climes, where whirlwinds and earthquakes, thunder, lightning, and the desolating hurricane, destroy all the hopes of man; where the bolt of heaven breaketh the cedar, and shakes the wilderness to its foun-

dation; nor where contagion has fixed her polluted throne, and the pestilence hath its commission to depopulate whole nations at a stroke : but that it has pleased Providence to allow me the breath of life, in a country, whose advantages are upon the whole the first in the world; he has bestowed on us, an island guarded by the ocean, and open to all the treasures of every shore : a land productive of corn, herbs, timber, and fruits; watered with the most genial dews of heaven; feeding innumerable springs and wells, and navigable rivers; a land that maintains on its surface, cattle, fowls, flocks, dairies, hives, and a thousand of classes labouring for its blessed inhabitants; and from whose very bowels you may dig innumerable articles for daily use : natural advantages these, without speaking of acquired wonders from the improved state of husbandry, trade, building, learning, and the other benefits and ornaments of the country.

Nor are these all. The author, in a style of the like chaste simplicity, the truest constituent of the sublime, passed, I remember, to other

causes *why* we should render the fervid thanks of our hearts for being born to the goodly heritage of Britain: particularly for the civil liberty we enjoy.

And not without good reason. The life of the meanest of us, my friend, is so protected by the law, that in the heat of the day after the labourer has mowed half an acre of grass, he may *securely* lie down and refresh himself by sleep at the end of the swathes; or, should any daring hand invade his life, either his fellow-servant, the master who hired him, or the King of his country, his blood would be required of the murderer by the hand of the magistrate. O ye despots! wheresoever ye have fixed your hateful empire, attend and blush at your usurpations; those usurpations which first made the poor worms ye have trod upon raise themselves to your crest, and seize your throats! Here, no man can keep back the hire of the labourers who have reaped his fields. The poorest subject is absolute lord of his little all: the ploughman may leave his coat at the land's end, and the gleaner trust her bread and

her bottle, and her scanty sheaf on the green balk: THE LAW OF ENGLAND IS AS A FIRE ROUND ABOUT THEM.* The freedom, too, of the lowliest man is established. He lives where he pleases, toils where he chooses; and the charities, when he can toil no longer, are at hand to relieve his sickness, and to smooth the pillow of his age. In many countries, we both of us know but too well, the breath, strength, health, and labour of the poor are appropriated: the very life of the vassal is at the will of his lord: there, the subordinate classes of society have no property: they are

* These assertions are admitted and confirmed by an illustrative passage of Mr. MORITZ, from whose Tour I quoted for you in the addenda of my last.

“When we here see,” observes the generous stranger, “how, in this happy country, the lowest and meanest member of society, thus unequivocally testifies the interest which he takes in every thing of a public nature; when we see, that a carter, a common tar, or a scavenger, is still a man; nay, an Englishman: and as such, has his rights and privileges defined and known, as exactly and as well as his King, or as his King’s minister; it is impossible not to feel very differently affected from what we are, when staring at our soldiers in their exercises at BERLIN.”

themselves property, the slaves of the higher orders, who buy and sell them as part of the live stock on their estates. How many countries are there, I have sojourned in some, which resemble a large jail, a house of bondage, in which the chains of some are of iron, and those of others are of gold; but all is slavery! and as our delightful Yorick says, "it is a bitter portion."

Is it not then with heart-felt truth that Englishmen exclaim—"O happy people! O blessed country!" It is true that the Demon of war has drawn his sword, and is still thirsting for blood, but your garners afford, in the midst of an almost famished universe, all manner of store, your sheep bring forth tens of thousands on your yet unmolested plains; you may be objects of envy, but not of plunder. Your wives, your children, your property, your lives, your religion, are yet your own!

For all these beatitudes, O friend of my heart! and for numberless more, though I trust I have publicly borne testimony that I have travelled off all little nationalities, that I

have had an eye to see, and a heart to feel, all the *goodness*, and the *good* of other lands, and that I am by no means blind, or insensible to the frailties and imperfections of my own, as I shall, in the course of our correspondence, have occasion to evince; yet, for all the blessings above enumerated, I praise the GOD of empires, him who, to use the inspired language of the prophet, instructed the ploughman to open and break the clods of our generous earth, make smooth her surface, cast her wheat, her rye and barley in the places appointed for them, and own, that he has, indeed, given to me, and to my countrymen, a goodly heritage!

You are hastening to share it with me; my heart of hearts shall welcome you: and *your* heart of hearts shall then bear record of the truths I am telling you.

LETTER VI.

NORTH RUNCTON,

August 5, 1798.

NOTWITHSTANDING my enthusiastic love of nature's beauty, whether blooming over the earth in flowers, expanding in billows on the sea, dimpling in streams, or breathing along the valleys, you are not now to be told that all these are subordinate, in my scale of things estimable, to the beauty of the human mind: neither the graces, nor the glorious vegetation, nor the skies, by which they are canopied; nor even the blessed orb, in whose rays they all rejoice, can furnish so rich a harvest as this, where the soil is naturally good, and has been well cultivated.

Let this sentiment prepare you for a gleaning of mental excellence, the object of which has presented itself since my last.

Previously to taking a wider range, and while I am yet stationary at the smiling abode of my friends, excursing in morning rides or evening walks, permit me to shew you objects, which not only rapid travellers, but many who have their dwellings amongst them, pass over unnoticed; either because they are too near their eyes, or because, having seen them so often, they now cease to see them at all. It will form part of my pleasure also, and I cannot but think it will make an ingredient in yours, to draw for you, occasionally, as our pausing-places may allow, some of the *intellectual* features of my country; without which you can catch no real likeness of it: *mind*, being the vital part of every just portrait. That of England, from my pencil, can be but a sketch. I have promised, however, to make it a true one. The light delicacy, indeed, which finishes while it seems but to sketch, is the point to be endeavoured; and this I will attempt. At present I wish to make you partaker of as Arcadian an evening as ever *could* have graced the Utopian dominions, had they really been on the map of the world.

You already know, from my former report, that this villa is in the midst of a garden; yet the happiness which last night sat as a guest within, derived little of its charm from that circumstance, and little from the unnumbered sweets that embalmed the air, and carried fragrance into every apartment that was opened to receive it. No, my friend, it was of a kind, that had the dwelling been situated on a barren heath, and offered no better accommodation than is to be found in the hut of an unpoetical modern shepherd, it would have elevated your mind, your feelings, above the influence of external circumstance; nay, it would have exalted to a felicitous height every mind not meaner than the hut, not more steril than the heath-ground. This interesting enjoyment was derived from the innocent effusions, and unfoldings of nature, in one of her fairest and best works: the mind of a lovely girl just old enough to be yet called truly a work of nature, pure as the flowrets that sprang around her cottage.

The party was composed of six persons, most of whom are known to you. The worthy,

unassuming Fanny R*****, whom neither indulgence or affection could ever spoil, nor rigour or ingratitude alienate. My worthy friend and his wife, who offer to their guests, besides the good things which hospitality provides, "the feast of reason and the flow of soul;" a French emigrant general officer, * whose private virtues, even had they not been endeared by misfortune, are sufficiently numerous to counterbalance the injury done to us by his professional bravery, when duty raised his sword against that nation which is now his shield: to him must be added your correspondent, and the blooming hope of my host and hostess, the interesting Sophia.

As the last mentioned of these furnished the intellectual part of the evening's entertainment, you will receive with pleasure a sketch of her person. And yet, I know you are such a champion for general symmetry in the works of nature, that were I to delineate only the *mind*

* Le Baron de Pujol.

of Sophia you would give the correspondent form and features; averring, that to be in natural harmony, a well-organized mind must be placed in a well-organized body. And, perhaps, you would not be very far from the truth; for, although it occasionally happens that the mental gem is enclosed in a sorry casket, and so *vice versa*, there is much more frequently a due proportion and symmetry of the interior and exterior of the human œconomy; and *that*, independent on all modes of education and habits of life. But admitting the full influence of these, when I tell you that the custom of Sophia from her earliest age, in her little rambles through the garden or fields, have been to stray from her servants, or mother, in order to cull such flowers, weeds, shells or pebbles, as were remarkable either in the tint, colouring or texture, for a certain delicacy; when I observe to you, that she would select these from innumerable others more shewy, more generally attracting, and which would have been the choice of most children: if, for instance, roses were to form part of her collection, they would

be chiefly in bud, or slightly blown : or, if any more strongly tinted shrubs, or gaudier flowers, were admitted, it would be by way of contrast, and they would be thrown by her little fingers in the back-ground.—Were I, in addition to these facts, to assure you that flaunting or vulgar flowers would never be seen in her hand, and that in all her *arrangements* she discovered the like delicacy of taste : that, moreover, her selection of playmates was but a more animated continuation of this delicacy, preferring the gentle to the rude, the pensive to the romping : that her infant affections shewed the same bias among her feathered and animal favourites, which were ever the more endeared to her in the proportion as they stood in need of her protection ; that their wants, their sickness, or their little sorrows, would have more of her notice than their prosperity, health or sports : a bird in full song, and a lamb in full frolic, would be neglected were but an invalid wren beside them, to claim her care—should I join to this the information that every sound of her voice, from its most whispered note to “the

top of its compass" is music, in all its variations, would you not exclaim, *Sophia's person must be as delicate as her soul?* In truth, a first sight of this lovely girl would determine the most timid disciple of Lavater to associate congenial affections, and a mind in keeping with the almost ærial lightness of her form, her sylphid movements, her heaven-blue eyes, contour of face, redundance of light-brown hair playing round it, lips of softened ruby, and alternations of the lily and the rose in her complexion.

I, who have had opportunities of watching the opening and progression of her mind and person, almost from her birth, could propose a question to philosophers, as to the long-disputed thesis of *innate ideas*. Sophia began to be a nurse to the sick, a friend to the sorrowful, a separator of the delicate from the garish beauties of nature, before she had either time or opportunity to imitate either of her parents, who might, otherwise, have been successfully taken for her models.

Forgive me, then, ye who have adopted your

great master's opinion, that the human mind is but as a sheet of white paper to be afterwards filled up in the nursery, the school, and the world: forgive me, if I trace, or attempt to trace, certain manifestations of soul in the early dawn of human life to pure *nature*, unassisted by any thing below the sun. We may, perhaps, meet with illustrations as we proceed.

Sophia is now hastening to her ninth year, was herself but a visitor, being at the cot only for the holidays, which were, indeed, so near their end, that the promise of a supernumerary week was to be considered as a loan, borrowed from study and added to her half-year's jubilee. For though Sophia has no objection to study, she is too much a child of nature to reconcile easily to stated forms and periods of learning, and too much genius for lessons not of her own choosing.

When your correspondent entered, the subjects were, literally, shifting "from grave to gay, from lively to severe." In all these Sophia took a ready part, mixing a woman's wisdom with a child's simplicity, without which

the wisdom of youth is either premature, and therefore must have an early check, and produce, at last, but a dwarf's understanding at the age of an adult; or, it degenerates into cunning, and is fruitful only in mischief.

It had been a day of event to our Sophia. Early in the morning, several of her nurselings among the poultry had called upon her compassion: the last brood of chickens required unusual care. With sadness in her looks she brought one of them into the parlour, and she told us it had died in the night, for which she reproached the hen whom she had seen peck at it while it stood languishing before the mother, as she past clucking along with the rest of her brood. "What an unnatural parent!" exclaimed Sophia, running to caress her own. Another, she said, looked as if it were dying, and on being told that many creatures, particularly a hen, which is not saying much for the animal creation by the bye, would sometimes kill an invalid of its own species, nay, of its own family, to save the trouble of nursing, the indignant colour rose to her cheek, and she

hurried off the dead to succour the dying. The latter was, indeed, in as unpromising a state as a valetudinarian could well be found; a downcast head, drooping wing, ruffled plumage, or rather down, closed eyes, and feeble twitter. Its protectress breathed upon it, warmed it in her hand, dipt its feverish bill in wine, and cradled it in her bosom. In recompence of these good offices it seemed to revive, opened its eyes, and picked up some of the crumbs which Sophia had spread for it on the table. Thus recovered, she returned it to its mother with a charge to treat it more kindly; yet the first news of the morning was, that her *protégé* was no more. She left the breakfast-table without answering the intelligence any other way than by running for the deceased, which she brought in the hollow of a hand shaped by beauty, and, after desiring the company to bid it good bye for ever, took it into her own garden—a little slip of ground in the angle of the shrubbery, where she has not only a nursery but a place of burial—exhibiting, as she moved slowly along, a figure that would exactly

have suited the angel of pity, scarcely seeming to want the wings, which, for the sake of meeting the popular idea of angelic forms, a painter might, perhaps, have fixed on her beautiful shoulders.

But what is most to be admired in these her mental developements, is, that the objects which call them forth, occupy, for the time, her whole soul; and no miser was ever more earnest to add a guinea to his store, or to see it deposited in the strong box, and shining on the brooding heap, than is this little girl to add one comfort to the Being under her care. She cannot, on sad occasions, be averted from her pensioner till she has done her utmost to serve it. Its welfare seems to annihilate every promise or profession that enriched the preceding moment: this proves it to be *genuine*; proves it to be the pure and unelaborated operation of the heart. In discoursing with her dolls—and I have heard her give them very sage advice, and most serious lectures and reproofs on the propriety of their conduct, and reform of their manners—in the burial of a sparrow or a chicken,

it would be impossible, until the ceremonies are over, to call off her mind to any thing else, however pleasurable; although on joyful occasions, such as the high health of any creature she has domesticated, or any gay vision of fancy she has created—and she creates thousands in an hour—she will seize a new object, though but an insect on the carpet, and convert that into a very substantial amusement; and this also is an ingredient in the *genuine* of her character. A sage's steady wisdom, without a child's volition and simplicity is a bad omen; but the degree of her gravity is proportioned to the object: for example, the loss of her feathered favourites had been preceded by the supposed death of a four-footed friend, whom she had known and loved the greatest part of her life, and his fate was thought to be aggravated by several circumstances. The morning after this supposed disaster, our child of impulse followed her affectionate feelings, by appearing in suitable habiliments: sable ribbons graced her arms, and a black collar encircled her neck. Not contented with this, she invested the little

Juliet also, Romeo's only surviving daughter, with correspondent mourning, in which the pathetic black crape was as liberally made use of. It was the unaided suggestion of a heart alive to every sentiment and action of tenderness, and the friend of every living thing, at an age when too many children are the little tyrants of all within their reach. *and I said supposed death, because it turned out that the Destinies were pleased to extend the thread of poor Romeo's life, even to the date at which I am writing. The honest fellow is now sleeping at my feet under my writing table, and was amongst the old associates who awaited me here, and who, in his reception of me, did not seem to forget that I was a friend to dogs in general, and to him in particular. His escape from the Power "that putteth all things under his feet," would seem too marvellous for any persons not gifted with a faith enlarged enough for Bruce and Robinson Crusoe. Perhaps certain critics, who, measuring the powers of all other beings by the partial scale of their own observations, determine the point at which*

the progressions of instinct, by the help of education, *must* stop; and thereupon make a liberal use of the censorial words, *absurd, unnatural, impossible*; perhaps, I say, dear friend, some of these, in their all-wise decisions, may add the name of the GLEANER to those right-wonderful travellers; for there are, I find, who dispute the ingenuity and accomplishments of his poor Canary, the sagacity of his travelling Steed, though by all the powers of nature he swears, he has acted but the part of a faithful historian to both these honest and ingenious creatures, and if his heart has now and then thrown its most glowing effusions over their actions and characters, and sometimes called on Fancy for a decoration; that, although it embellishes, does not injure or conceal the sacred lineaments of Truth: what, but a cold and Cynic caviller will quarrel with a description that gives to an innocent and interesting object its full power of pleasing?

Sweet Bijou! honest Surefoot! farewell!
your genius and your adventures have drawn
the sigh of sympathy from many a generous

bosom, and your *true* story shall be long dear to reason, to feeling, and the heart, not from merit in your historian, but from the transactions he records.

Notwithstanding this, and notwithstanding also, that the extraordinary and fictitious-seeming events in the preservation of Romeo, might be attested * by as faith-worthy beings as ever bore witness to the truth, the particulars of this matter shall stand over to our next meeting.

Let us return to the sweet Sophia, to detail the infinity of glee with which she sported over some observations on domestic happiness, as she saw it subsist between the amiable pair to whom she belonged, to mark the *naïveté* with which she felicitated the husband on the treasure of such a wife, while the bliss-overflowing eyes of the former confirmed the truth of her

* I had the pleasure of hearing them attested since these Letters were sent to you, by General H*****, who has frequently seen as extraordinary feats achieved by Birds, as have been related of my poor Canary. Indeed, you know they might be attested by almost any man in Germany.

remarks, to describe the affection with which she divided herself among the whole party, now, wishing passionately, that each individual might be blest with each other's society through life, and undivided by death; now, hoping that after living an hundred years, in unbroken amity, all present might occupy one grave, and, then, looking on this as impossible, while she placed the happy couple and herself in one, and the Lady, the General, and the Gleaner, in another, would be a vain attempt, the image of death assuming its usual terrors, she returned to the cheering idea of protracted life, and protested, with all the fervour, though without the oath of uncle Toby, and without knowing there had been an uncle Toby, or an oath, *that none of the groupe should die*; but that GOD ALMIGHTY would keep them upon earth a long, long time to love each other, and afterwards permit them all to meet in Heaven, and there live together for ever.

It were in vain, you are aware, to expect the effect of this description on your mind, should at all equal that which was produced by the

object described, because a great share of the impression and interest grew out of looks and actions far beyond the reach of written language, and to give the mere words without these, where each of those actions and looks was grace, beauty and innocence, unsullied by the world, and free from the pertness, or hoyden freedoms of a spoiled child, is to offer you but the shadow; yet they may give you an interesting idea of the beautiful substance.

I do not, however, place it before you as a partial selection, to serve as a portrait of a little favourite, nor as a specimen of the grace and talents of English children, in preference to any I have observed in other countries; but I bring it forward in some sort to strengthen the ground on which I shall presume to dissent from those who maintain the impossibility of innate ideas of any kind. In the contemplation of this lovely girl, and a few others, I have been strangely puzzled to know from whence, if not from some such ideas, can have proceeded the eager pursuit and *choice* of whatever is most delicate or graceful; and the neglect or rejection of their

contraries, at an age when the discrimination of colours, or the determinations of fashion upon them, cannot possibly have been the result of tuition, or that earnest curiosity, or that imitative power, which, at a certain stage of youth, are such wonderful helps to the opening mind. From the age of three to five or six curiosity must be the chief engine of knowledge; but it cannot teach in matters of taste the superior delicacy and interest of a flower, tinted faintly, or with too much strength, for our idea or feeling of the delicate, or regulate a child in the choice of a shrub or shell, which in its leaf or blossom, formation or mark, bears the like characteristic.

The selector is of too tender an age to comprehend the distinction, or the definition of delicacy, even were the mother or governess to explain it: now as similar reasoning will go to a number of other early propensions of human beings, in their choice either of the elegant and delicate, or the tawdry and glaring, it will, at least, support me in a query submitted to learning and candour, whether we must not neces-

sarily refer these preferences to some *inborn delicacy*, or *coarseness* of the infant mind ; whether we must not consider them as dictates of pure nature, seeing they are antecedent to all instruction and imitation ? Be this as it may, you will agree with me, in believing, that from whatever source these propensions are derived, they “ grow with our growth, and strengthen with our strength.”

In one of the cases, indeed, a change may take place : the youth, who in childhood, appeared attached to the gaudy and garish, may sometime be taught a better taste ; but it will scarce ever happen that an infant admiration of the delicate and gentle will lose any of its relish for those graces of Nature, much less be exchanged for their reverse : on the contrary, they almost always form into principles and habits, which as life proceeds, will influence a mature person in whatever are the proper objects of them : I think, indeed, it would be difficult to adduce a single instance, even as an exception, where either the man or woman, who, in childhood, discovered a bias towards the abovemen-

tioned graces of Nature, was forced, either by bad culture, or worse associations, into a total dereliction of what must have once afforded them so many delightful sensations, the very memory of which will be endeared.

If, therefore, instead of being repressed, these dawning indications of, permit me to call it, a *natural* good taste are fostered and encouraged, of what progress are they not capable? and what avenues of bliss in thought and action do they not open to their possessor?

Did you ever *hear* of a being who had the impulses of the child that has led to this train of reflection, turning out an inelegant, I had almost said an immoral, woman? A very great perversion of what I have ventured, but not presumptuously, to consider as *innate ideas*, of the GENTLE and DELICATE, must have expelled them from their native residence in the juvenile bosom, before this degeneracy can happen. Bad tuition may do much, evil communications, yet more, towards dislodging the angel guests from their proper mansion; but, as both education and example, instead of unlearning, will

sanction and confirm what pure nature has taught, I shall consider it a more arduous task to change the flower-garden, in which stands the abode of Sophia, into a morass, and the salutary air that breathes fragrance around it, into "a pestilential congregation of vapours," than to see any noxious weed of folly, or poisonous plant of vice, if you will allow me to proceed with the florid image I first took hold of, encumber the fair soil, and rob of its natural fruit the mind now opening upon the maternal eye, and upon her own innocent heart, a Paradise of sweets!

Just as I had written the last passage, the blooming subject of it tripped up stairs to my chamber, in the way to her own, to bid me, after all the little adventures of the day and evening, good night. The animation of genial discourse had kept her beautiful eyes unclosed, and unfatigued, many hours beyond that of her usually seeking and *finding* repose: for in the bloom of youth, health, spirits, and innocence, what should invade her slumbers? But as it had been a day of enterprize, so had it been

an evening of indulgence, and under the charm of that youth, those spirits and that innocence, the Hours seemed to have thought their own wings too heavy, and to have borrowed the lighter pinions of the moments. Sophia found me at my writing-table, and having in the morning presented her with a little book, partly extracted from the Letters, which, at your wish, I have continued in this correspondence, she desired to know if I were making any more Gleanings? then, without waiting any reply, she repeated her caresses and adieus, and as she tripped to the door to join her maid, said—“ Well, God bless you, I wish you would glean me! and what an odd little thing you would make of me.” I stepped to her chamber door to inform her I had done so, and I had not a doubt the friend to whom I was writing would thank me for it.

Returning to my table, I felt strongly inclined to close what I had said concerning her with some wishes of peculiar kindness. But I knew not what to wish.

Oh! thou, unspotted, by the world, the

genuine thought, the natural heart, the generous impulse, the fancy, that, though it has the rapidity of light, never imagined guile; the pure word, and the alabaster deed; these, dear innocent, are already thine—what then, is there to wish? what to pray for thee? what, but the *continuance* of these treasures, these beatitudes? Yes, their continuation will be a foretaste of Heaven, and of “the best loved angels there.” Fountain of purity, continue them! and now, without apology, I bid *you*, my dear friend, farewell.

P. S. Since writing the above, the holiday Jubilee is ended; Sophia has returned to her *school*. However well the seminary may be conducted, it is, like every other, a long passage into the temple of general society. I repeat, therefore, with yet greater energy and fervour the prayer that closed my letter. But, I mentioned the presentation of a book to my little friend, in some measure connected with a former correspondence: suffer me to add the lines which accompanied it; they in a manner incorporate with the subject.

TO SOPHIA, with "PITY'S GIFT."

Presented by Command.

POETS can hear, or fancy that they hear,
Seraphic symphonies distinct and clear ;
Hence Pity's voice, as here I bent my way,
Her " Gift" perusing, said or seemed to say,
" Mortal, that little book, immediate bear
To C——'s cot—I have a nurs'ry there—
Lay it on Sophy's breast, 'tis Pity's shrine ;
The off'ring yours—the inspiration mine ;
My hand-maid she ; elected at her birth
To prove my *representative* on earth."

The Goddess said : her orders I obey,
And on her hand-maid's breast the off'ring lay.

LETTER VII.

LYNN, *August*, 1798.

As, upon all occasions, I feel a pleasure in praising, and a sincere reluctance to withhold praise, it is some mortification that I cannot agree with the Tourist who has called this a *beautiful* town, though I am ready to allow the application of his other epithets, namely, that it is rich and populous; nor will I deny, that its situation, near the fall of the Ouse into the sea, is highly favourable to the extension of its trade, which is thus conducted into no less than eight different counties, opening, thereby, as many channels for the produce of our own, and other shores.

By whatever road you enter this sea-port, my dear Baron, you will be impressively struck with its general resemblance to some of your own German, and many French, fortified

towns. Its neat quicksets on each side the road as you enter by the South gate, the gate itself, the deep rampart-looking elevation, the entrenched ditch by which it is encompassed on the land side, the platform of cannonry, the formal military-looking walks, terrace fashion, and the fragment of ancient wall, with the various old buildings, in *keeping* with this picture of a foreign fortress, will all bring *home* to your recollection. Indeed, it is almost impossible to offer an Englishman a juster idea of the usual style of a continental town, or a foreigner any one more resembling what he has been accustomed to see, than by referring him to a view of Lynn. I wish I could extend the resemblance between this and many of the French or German * public roads, but *there* it falls off importantly on the part of the two former; the turnpike road to Lynn in almost every

* Even when there was not a single turnpike in the country, the Norfolk roads were naturally so good, that when our King Charles was its visitor in 1671, he said the county should be cut into strips to make roads for the rest.

direction, but especially near the little village, I have lately drawn for you, being so beautiful, that I am not sure whether the most national traveller would not overlook the similitude of the town to any one in his own land, in his admiration of the paths that lead to it. And the cultivated scenery which variegate the prospect as he passes along, though somewhat contrasting the war-breathing spirit of bastions and battlements, by displaying a specimen of the smiling progress of modern agriculture, gives that assemblage of the rich and the agreeable which are seldom *completely* associated but in the landscapes of England.

As you advance towards Lynn, however, this scenery gives way to various circumstances which more assimilate to Holland; the meadows are on each side separated rather by the ditch, and the drain, than by hedge-rows; the soil flattens upon the eye; the marshy earth appears to sink under the feet of the herds that browse it, but the verdure is lovely, and the pasture abundant.

You will very soon perceive, in this, as in

every other part of England, vestiges of the religion which for so many ages and in so many regions of the earth prevailed, and which, indeed, still maintains its ground, though, it seems at present, to be *trembling* ground, in various parts of Europe. Catholicism, however, in this island, is now rather permitted than encouraged; she is confined to the contracted chapel, or even to temporary edifices yet more limited, where she is privileged by the courtesies of the country, to rear her altar, strew her incense, wreath her garlands, and chaunt her oraison. But her magnificent pile, that expanded widely its commanding powers, her consecrated grounds, that appropriated and encircled half a district within its walls, and took whole villages in its gripe—till Ceres and Pomona were compelled to become tributary, not only by surrender of their first fruits, but their last—her “cloud-capt towers, and solemn temples,” are to be seen amongst us no more. Of her former grandeur, and of her once almost immeasurable power, we trace no longer the trophies but the tombs; her disjointed monas-

try, her ivy-girded ruin, her proud abbey converted into huts for the herdsman, or stalls for the ox, and her most secret places where the penitent breathed her confession, embraced her punishment, or received her pardon amidst hymns that seemed to penetrate her soul, now all changed to the asylum of the bat, and to receive only the vespers of the night-bird.

We retain, however, the names of numberless Saints even in our churches, and the Cross is frequently seen displayed at the top of our Protestant Temples : thus, the principal church in Lynn, which is said to have been built about the year 1100, by HERBERT DE LOZINGA, Bishop of Norwich,* is dedicated to St. Mar-

* The etymology of this Prelate's name, does not come out much to the justice of his character. Camden says, that the word *leasing* in Saxon, signifies a *lye* or *trick*, for which reason, Bishop Herbert had the surname of Lozinga, and it seems to be admitted by all writers, that the character of his youth and old age contrasted each other. When young, say his biographers, he was loose, wild, and usurious; in *three years*, he grew so rich as to purchase the abbey of Winchester and the bishoprick of Thetford, for which he was stigmatized by William of Malmesbury as the *Vir Pecuniosus*. When old, nothing of Herbert was in Herbert,

garet, who is the titular Saint and Patroness of the Town: it is, also, curious enough to give you a scrap of superstition that attaches to the history of this Virgin. She is reported to have conquered a fierce Dragon with a Cross; so the good men of Lynn have no less than three

laudably adopting, and, it is said, often repeating the words of St. Hierom, *erravimus juvenus, emendemus senes*. To atone for the former, Pope Paschal II. commanded him to build monasteries and churches, all of which adds my intelligencer on this subject, he performed *religiously*, erecting besides St. Margaret's at Lynn and several others, the *Cathedral of Norwich, and a Palace for himself!* I will not withhold, however, the candid reflections which have been brought forth as a sett-off against his former simoniacal practices. In criticising, says his advocate, the founder of so many magnificent edifices, if we admit that he really acquired great riches by the means of servility and flattery, it was much to his honour, and we hope a full expiation of the frailties of a courtier, that he applied them, not to the vain purposes of an *useless and ostentatious* display of human power and greatness, but in the infinitely more commendable pursuit of erecting such magnificent monuments of piety, as promise to be the admiration of ages yet to come: and howsoever he might acquire the surname of *Lozinga*, or be called *Vir Pecuniosus*, which is *now* no stigma at all, we think that the private virtues and public charities of his riper years were such, as in more modern times would have been esteemed sufficient to atone for a multitude of the follies of youth.

dragons' heads, *each* wounded with a cross, for the Town Arms. This is by way of compliment, and the effigies of the patroness are impressed on the public seal. She is standing in a right victorious posture, wounding and treading this same dragon under foot; with a Latin inscription too, which, no doubt, must be very pleasing to her: and an ancient man whom I conversed with on the subject, assures me that the dragon tipifies *the devil himself!*

Saint NICOLAS, * has, likewise, some sacred honours assigned him in his chapel, which was erected in the reign of our third Edward, but I can glean nothing to distinguish him from the saint-hood in general. St. James, indeed, whose chapel

* It is asserted, that Norfolk has the greatest number of parish churches of any in the three kingdoms, and if, as is stated, it contains $1793\frac{1}{2}$ square miles, or 148,000 acres, and 240,000 inhabitants, it is 134 persons to every mile; and it being supposed that one person out of every nine or ten is able to bear arms, the county and city have 24,000 men so qualified. So long ago as 1574, the muster-roll contained 8,240 names, but at this moment, when every man is a patriot soldier, the defensive power of the county must be encreased in proportion.

was demolished with others at the dissolution, exhibits a circumstance more honourable to him than if he had to boast a priory in all the pomp and ceremonies of monastic dignity. By a liberal benefaction of the mayor, burgesses and inhabitants, this dismantled edifice was rebuilt in 1682, to serve as a *charity* for fifty decayed old men, women, and poor children, where a comfortable endowment is made for their work, instruction and maintenance, and for putting out the children to honest employments: of late, great additions, we are told, have been made, and St. JAMES's chapel is become the general workhouse * of the whole town.

Should you ever happen to be here in February, you would see a something that a little resembles one of your German Fairs in what they call the Lynn Mart; but the new walk, or mall, which has so extremely a French air,

* Of the various religious houses, or priories, which once flourished in this town, there remains nothing so perfect as a hexagon steeple of the Gray Friars near this workhouse.

is, in the blooming season, really worth your observation. What follows, I have tried by the test of the living eye, and find the descriptions accurate as well of this as some surrounding objects: concerning which as there is nothing new to be said, I retain what seems to me worth preserving of the old. This public promenade is about 340 yards long, and eleven wide between the quick hedges. At convenient distances on each side, are semi-circular recesses in the verdure sufficient to receive twenty people on each bench. Upon a gentle ascent on the right, is a plantation and shrubbery, at the bottom of which winds a stream, and at the end of the shrubbery is a small plantation of lime trees, intermingled with Scotch firs, whence there is a good view of Lym and the adjacent villages, where wood, water, modern buildings and ancient ruins, form a various and interesting prospect.

About half way between the South and East gates, stand the remains of an ancient oratory, with several vaults and cavities under ground, over which are some dark cells for the priests to

take confessions, and above them a small chapel in the figure of a cross, arched and enriched with carvings; it is dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, and commonly called the Lady's, or the Red Mount, whither Romish penitents, in their pilgrimage to the holy wells and monastery of our Lady at Walsingham, used to resort and perform their devotions.

Of this Lady of WALSINGHAM, we shall have further to speak as we proceed. She was, indeed, *in her way*, a lady of ladies, and did we continue to be proud of what we once boasted in this stile, my good protestant Baron, the atchievements of this wonder-working dame might be pitted against even the long-famous Lady of LORETTO.

Meantime, you are not to think the Lynn monastics lived and died by thousands, without leaving behind them any trace more useful than the nodding fragment, and desolated wall; for it is recorded that of these thousands, two holy men had mortal life to some social purpose; the one a Franciscan Friar, saith the annalist, an excellent musician, mathematician and

astrologer, bred at Oxford, after having applied his studies chiefly to astronomy, by the help of his astrolabe, made five voyages to the North seas. In the first he sailed from Lynn to Iceland with company, whom he left on the sea-coast, while he travelled up into the island in search of discoveries. He presented his charts of the northern seas, at his return, to Edward III. in the year 1360, and they were afterwards made use of in the reign of Henry IV. Chaucer had a great esteem for him, stiling him, Frere Nicholas Linn, a Reverend Clerk. He is said to have wrote a book of Discoveries. The other, *made Indexes to Thirty-three Writers!*

But what are a pair of Monks? This town, we are told, has been honoured with the visits and favours of fifteen royal personages! Let us see whether any of these have bequeathed "the good men of Lynn," any better legacy than the Reverend Clerk, who wrote the book of Discoveries, or the enduring Carmelite, *who made Indexes to thirty-three Writers.*

Yes! one of them presented the corporation

with an elegant double gilt, embossed and enamelled cup and cover, weighing seventy-three ounces, and holding a full pint; which is well preserved, and upon all public occasions and entertainments used with some uncommon ceremonies; at drinking the health of the King or Queen; and whoever goes to visit the mayor, drinks sack out of this cup. He also, it is said, then gave them *from his own side*, a sword with a silver mounting, to be carried before the mayor;—there's for you!—but as the charter, dated September 14, in the sixth year of this King's reign, calls him prepositus, or provost, a title not clearly defined, it has been denied that King John granted the town a mayor, but that it had one in the last year of his reign, is evident from his letters patent, dated June 7, 1216, directed:

—Screw your expectations then to their proper bent, and proceed. Flourish kettle-drum and trumpet! for a circumstance that calls upon the most chaste fidelity and minute historical circumspection, is at hand. My friend, you are no doubt prepared. Read on.

KING JOHN GAVE THIS SWORD TO THE MAYOR
AND GOOD MEN OF LYNN.

Bishop Gibson in his addition to Camden, observes, that this sword, which by the inscription, is *said* to have been given by KING JOHN, was really the gift of KING HENRY the VIII. after the town came into his possession; and he changed their burgesses into aldermen, and granted them several privileges. The charter granted by King John, does not mention the sword, but that granted by Henry expressly says, "*he granted them a sword to be carried before their mayor.*" A loose paper of Sir Henry Spelman's, dated September 15, 1630, says, one THOMAS KENET, town-clerk of LYNN, assured him to compose an inscription, to be engraved upon the plain hilt of the town-sword, as above stated: "KING JOHN gave this sword to the town;" hereupon he caused the person who gave this information, and was then his scholar, to write these words:—

Ensis hic Donum fuit Regis Johannis.

A suo ipsius latere datum.

IN ENGLISH.

King John took this sword from *his own side*,
and gave it to this town;
which the sword-bearer carried to Mr. Cooke,
a Goldsmith, who engraved it upon one side of
the hilt. If this story be true, the inscription
of which the town so much boasts, is of no
authority. On the other side of the hilt, is
vivat Rex Henericus octavus, Anno Regni sui 20.

The gentlemen of the corporation insist, that
the sword now borne before the mayor, *was*
given by King John, and has been used for
that purpose from the time of Henry III; and
that when some kings have honoured the town
with their presence, the *mayors themselves* have
carried this sword before them! “and it is
remarkable,” says Mr. Mackerell, “that in
a window on the north side of the choir, near
the altar of St. Nicholas’s chapel, the town
arms and the sword are depicted in glass, and
most probably were fixed there soon after erect-
ing the chapel, and glazing the windows, which
is supposed to have been in the reign of
Edward III, between the years 1326 and

1376, or about 150 years after King John is said to have given the sword to the town. Upon the whole, it is pretty clear, that the sword was given by King John, but whether from his *own side*, and to be carried before a provost or a mayor, must still remain doubtful; if there be any error in the inscription upon the sword, it is in saying that King John took it from his own side, thereby intimating, that it was the sword he commonly wore, which it is not easy to believe, it not only being much too large for an offensive weapon, but also, like all other swords used for purposes of state, by corporate bodies."

The corporation consists of a mayor, recorder, twelve aldermen, and eighteen common-council men, a town clerk, chamberlain, &c. the town has sent two burgesses to parliament ever since the 26th of Edward I, (1298,) and the election is in the whole body of the freemen and free-burgesses, in number about 330, and the mayor is the returning officer.

I have been the more particular in detailing to you this very great affair as I find it stated in

all the traditions of it, because, you see, it is extremely important whether the sword was taken from the royal side, by himself, or offered by the medium of a more plebeian hand!—Nor would I, by any means, have you attach any credit to the insinuation of those who dispute whether the regal personage above-mentioned gave either the Cup or Sword; for as King John is not one of our English monarchs who can afford posterity to lose even a trifling instance of his having done any thing worthy of remembrance, though he was *compelled*, you know, by his barons, to do that which remains the pride of our constitution, confirm MAGNA CHARTA, one would not make his little less, by depriving him of even the *gilding* of a liberal action, though but in the gift of a gay cup and a fine sword. The more particularly, as the donation seems to connect with the public benefit of granting the town of Lynn, now called *Lynn Regis*,* to be a free

* Before the reformation it was called Lynn-Episcopi, the property of the Bishop of Norwich. It retained its

borough. This was done on the petition of John Grey, the Bishop of Norwich, (1204,) by

name of Bishop's Lynn till the time of Henry VIII, who, exchanging the monastery of St. Bennet in the Holme, and other lands for the revenues of the Bishoprick, this town came into his wide-receiving, and no less wide-wasting-hands, and in consequence was elevated or degraded, whichever you please, to Lynn Regis. Should you wish to have it taken higher up into the tree of etymology, Camden and Spelman can help you to clamber; though you will, from the topmost branch of the former look down upon nothing but a cheerless pool, and chilling lake, which the old British word Lhyn expresses, and from which it derives its name: but Spelman stoutly denies this, affirming that the name is LEN, in Saxon, a farm or tenure in fee. Take which you like best, my friend: I cannot think there is a pin to choose between them; and though I would not reject an atom of information, that could either inform the head, or interest the heart, or even refuse to gratify curiosity with a single word, or the antiquity-hunter with a rusty nail, on which an event or circumstance worth preserving had hung upon it but for an instant, I must confess that the musty minutiae which journalists rake up of things which have neither "pith or moment," but which, nevertheless, they retail by the rood, are, amongst the disgusting historical nausea which sicken me as I read. However, provided we can get at some of the kernel, let who will hunt after the husk. These remarks by no means apply to those tourists who have endeavoured to present the heart of the nut, and throw away its shell. I have already shewn that Norfolk has some of those,

virtue of which the burgesses were to choose themselves a prætor or provost; and although the good Bishop tacked to this a condition, that the said provost should be *subject to the mitre*, taking an oath to that end yearly, and be called the *Bishop's Man*, it was, no doubt, for one of those weighty reasons which have led the spiritual guardians of all countries, and at all times, to take on themselves the trouble of having a controul over temporals, purely to the intent of teaching good management. This part of Norfolk, however, was not always propitious to the princely visitant, for he is said to have lost not only his baggage but his treasure in passing the marshes of Lynn in 1216. The marsh lands here spoken of form a peninsula—surrounded by navigable rivers, and an arm of the sea—consisting of about 30,000 acres, feeding as many sheep.

Several of the historians of this country mention a custom established at Lynn, so long ago as 1588, called the *Feast of Reconciliation*, holden the first Monday of every month, when the mayor, aldermen, and the preachers, met

to hear, decide, and settle, in an amicable manner, all controversies between man and man, in order to prevent law-suits. No doubt, a very commendable expedient, but as this convention no longer subsists, I presume the litigious *spirit* that is said, in ancient days, to vex the good fellowship of the county, has been *quieted*: but the wise ancient man I before mentioned, in the case of the Saint, the Devil, and the Dragon, said "there happened, as he had heard his grandam report, so many quarrelling bouts at the Feast of Amity, springing from difference of opinion, that they soon wanted another Reconciliation assembly to settle themselves; so the lawyers took it in hand, Sir," continued he, "and managed the disputes of the town their own way, and though we have a power of Feasts here every year, there has not been one Reconciliation Feast since; and somehow, though we have more lawyer-gentry now-a-days ten to one, than i' my young time, more than a limb of them to a street, and e'en almost one to a quarrel, I don't find there is more of the good thing called peace, amongst

us than there us'd to be, though there is twenty times the law, which is, to be sure, another good thing, you know."

My ancient man smiled, and seems so curiously to have explained, that I shall leave the subject, to say something of the TRADE of this thriving town, a very prominent feature, you will allow, in the portrait of all the sea-ports of this commercial isle. Lynn deals more largely in coals and wine than any other town in England, except London, Bristol, and Newcastle. In return for these articles of merchandize imported, it receives back for exportation the corn produced in the several counties which it supplies.

The rest of the LYNN lions are the statue of our third William in the quadrangle market-place, with a cross and sixteen-pillared dome and gallery round it; the theatre, and the assembly rooms: the first is under the direction of a very good conductor,* good performer, and good MAN, who attends even to the morals as

* Mr. BRUNTON.

well as the abilities of his company, which is, therefore, as respectable as attracting; and the last are ample and commodious. The Norfolk tourist has criticised its plan and construction, and certainly not fastidiously, but with justice; yet, as we have not room for the enumeration of defects for which there is none but the radical remedy, and these are not, my friend, the times for sustaining the cost of pulling down in order to rebuild a *luxury*, while every necessary article of life is almost doubled, and several trebled, in price, by absorbing but inevitable taxation, we will pass over the objections, and after a short pause pursue our journey.

In close of this letter, accept two commercial calculations; the one respecting a particular branch of the agriculture, the other of its exportation.

In the county of Norfolk are 660 parishes, and upon the average 260 acres of turnips grown in each, making 171,600 acres, the mere *hoeing* of which at 6s. per acre amounts to 51,480*l.* per ann. consequently more than one-seventh of the county are in turnips, as the total quantity

of acres in the county, I have already told you, are 1,148,000.

It has been said, that the four Norfolk ports export as much corn *as all the rest of England*. The following extract, taken from the custom-house books, at Lynn, is to be considered as the yearly average which has been exported to foreign markets and coastwise, for the years 1791, 1792, and 1793, which were far from being greatly productive. It will serve to shew you the astonishing energies of the country, when scope is given for unembarrassed exertion.

	Quarters.	Per Quarter.			Amount.		
		£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Wheat	30016	2	4	0	66035	4	0
Wheat Flour . .	3138	2	16	0	8786	8	0
Barley	112944	1	4	0	135532	16	0
Malt	10703	2	0	0	21406	0	0
Rye	12298	1	5	0	15372	10	0
Pease	3855	1	8	0	5397	0	0
Beans	4708	1	4	0	5649	12	0
Vetches	73	1	10	0	109	10	0
Rape Seed	2424	1	16	0	4361	8	0
					262650	8	0

LETTER VIII.

August, 1798.

IT has been well observed, that the minds of the English, like their climate, are chequered with an extraordinary variety ; which seems, indeed, to have been infused into the whole system of nature, and which is most agreeable where the scene is often changing. In most other countries, my friend, there is more of uniformity, both of clime and of character. In those, allowing for now and then a solitary Mannerist, or,—if you will grant me the word—Whimmist, there are not more distinctions of characters than of classes. The two degrees of high and low, with a sort of undefined intermediate body, form the whole nation, from the most stately order of the *premier Noblesse*, to the *petite Baron*, the distance of whose veins from the rich and *ichorous* blood which the

former derives from the unfathomable ocean of ancestry, is regarded but as a common puddle, dribbling through the system, impoverishing the very spirit, and unfitting him to mix a rivulet so sullied and scanty, with the crimson torrent that ennobles every artery of the *first order*.

Nor do the subordinate arrangements upon the Continent—and more especially, you know, in Germany,—the class of merchants, shop-people, and *le plus bas*, differ, essentially, from each other. A traveller, for instance, in a journey of a hundred miles, upon your land, will not only meet with duplicates and triplicates, but these again four times quadrupled, as like to each other, as tree to tree; yea, as leaf to leaf, even of the same *kind* of leaves. It is either the august Duke, the superb Marquis, the stately Margrave, the lofty Landgrave, the courtly Count, or the legitimate Baron: it is either these of the first class, their imitators of the second, or *their* imitators of the third. And so in the descending series; but all, in their line, very much alike, and on your

approach to them as little distinguishable in the interior of character, as soldiers, at a distance, in their ranks and uniform.

But a social Traveller cannot go an hundred yards on ENGLISH ground without meeting something in one person, if he meets any body, that separates him from another, either in the *manner or the matter of his character*; and it is fifty to one but the next person he encounters will shew himself off as differently, as if he were of a different country; even should the discourse with the first man be continued with the second.

A Dutch passage-boat, for instance, and an English stage-coach, will bring this into apt illustration. In the former, you will find a pipe in every mouth, and a long pause, broken only by the necessity of changing the barge, or by some solemn observation, for the most part, as ponderous as the vehicle in which you are drawn, and stagnant as the canal whereon you soporifically move. If the *great subject*, as they call it, (Trade) forces their thick and melancholy spirits through the fumes that envelop

them—I speak chiefly of commercial people, for I have shewn, and you will admit, faithfully, there are very merry and light Dutchmen—yea, and Dutch women too—they seem to labour through their clouds, and you hear but one sound upon the one theme. *Gelt, gelt, gelt—Money, money, money—That is my demand, what is your offer?* Half an hour after the question, the breath is drawn in, to negative by a nod, or sent off with a puff into a fuliginous affirmative: yes, or no, often beginning and ending the compact. And one trade is the echo of another trade, as similar to each other as their pipes.

An English stage-coach, on the contrary, is usually filled with as many unimitating beings, as there are places to receive them. There is something peculiar and *appropriate* in every passenger, whether male or female; and they are not only strongly marked from each other in the casual journey that associates them for the moment, but very frequently each is distinct from every other of his family. The thoughts, and the mode of expressing them, belong, ex-

clusively, to him or to herself; and though the principles of the heart, whether bad or good, are the same all over the world, it is here, chiefly, that those principles are displayed in an unnumbered variety of forms, I had almost said of fancy dresses, even like characters at a masque, according to the particular humour, or disposition of the wearer.

This diversity amongst us may be attributed, partly to the freedom of our government, which, without stiling some men into giants, and dwarfing others, preserves the due line of gradation, investing every individual with a just sense of himself, and of his happy situation. Of this we have instances which could scarce be credited in the less liberal arrangements of many other nations: particularly where prevails the spirit, that brings the whole human race, soul as well as body, to a size, cutting off the heads of the high, to level them with the low, and then, ludicrously, insisting we are one and all of the same stature.

But I conceive that the British constitution allows to every being that contributes to form

it, whatever be his state or station, an opportunity to *reverence himself*; and though this, sometimes, encourages an over-rated estimate, it preserves, upon the whole, the due measure and weight, civil, political and religious.

From whatever cause, however, our variegation from each other, in opinion and in action, arises, its effect is always pleasant, and often useful, to a traveller. It offers him, in every direction of his route, interesting, amusive, or singular companions by the way: and notwithstanding the deep national reserve, and coldness, imputed to my countrymen and women, and in which, it must be owned, they too often entrench themselves, they may be all brought into conversation if a traveller is resolved upon it; and, however thick may be the ice at first setting out, the chilling influence will yield by degrees; a few good-natured remarks will cheer the surface like morning sunshine on the frozen current; the first subject that calls out a human affection, will begin the thaw, and an ingenuous exchange of those still, small, civilities that make up the great comforts of life, will, like the

noon-tide ray, loosen yet more the stream from its impediments, the warm beams of the imagination, or the yet more ardent ones of the heart, will break out upon it; and there, joining each other, will melt away every remaining coldness and obstruction, so as to produce a flow of good humour, or good sense, during the rest of the voyage or journey, whether it be of a day, a month, or a year: perhaps, for the residue of the mortal travel of the parties. The ice, which, as it were, shuts up the lips, and closes the heart of an Englishman to strangers, whether of his own or other countries, being once thus unlocked, and the free current of his estimable heart disencumbered, the blood that animates it flows copiously towards the being who has in this manner subdued the frost, and ever after it exchanges with that being the permanent glow of friendship, or of love.

Much, therefore, depends on our taking out with us, a sufficient stock of that with which you, I know, are always amply provided—COURTESY—without a supply of which no man

should attempt to go beyond the limit of his own garden-walls, and, scarcely indeed, to their extent; for a gilded fly, an obstructing flower, an obtrusive sunbeam, or a few heat-drops falling in his path, might annoy and put him out of temper with heaven and earth. The courtesy I write of, is, in truth, as necessary to a traveller as his passport, or his letters of credit, and it will be current where all other recommendations and introductions fail. It will *create* urbanity in the bosom where it was unknown before. It is solid as sterling gold, lighter of carriage than an English bank-bill, and though all Europe confesses the intrinsic value and utility of both these, at home and abroad, unnumbered instances have met my eye in this jarring world, where an ounce of *courtesy* would have outweighed, in the purchase of human happiness or human content, more than our banks or treasuries could buy. "A sweet word not only turneth away wrath," but it leads to knowledge, to wisdom, to conciliation, to honour, pleasure and repose. It conducts to the best felicities of life, and

attains the most gracious ends by the easiest means.

Yet what is it but that engaging demeanour, proceeding from a disposition to give and to receive what ought to be acceptable to the loftiest mind and proudest spirit? What is it but to gild our home with the smile of Peace, and in our excursions abroad, to make the best of what we see and hear by the way? Where, either in a literal or social sense, the road is rugged, it softens its asperities by temper or forbearance: and where the surface is too smooth, not to be in overhaste to suppose there is no medium betwixt insult and adulation, but to remember, there are a thousand smooth surfaces which have not the slippery illusions of the ice, though they display the polish of the mirror, and often represent the true form and figure of the soul, in its beauty, as that mirror doth the shape and fashion of the body. And even when they *have* the treachery of the ice, our sliding lightly and boundingly over them, when we begin to feel them breaking their fair promise, may ensure our safety.

In short, my dear and faithful friend, wherever we are constrained to travel a land barren in itself, amidst the sullen silence of the brooding tempest, or its stunning clamours, when its vext spirit is let loose, whether it be a storm of the elements over our heads, or those more furious and destructive hurricanes in men's bosoms, both of which every traveller on this earth *must* sometimes encounter, it is even *wonderful* of what consequence is this courteous amenity. It steals a sun-beam over the most gloomy parts of nature and society, and adds a ray to their brightest splendours.

In my former remarks, I confessed that this *magic power* was more generally possessed abroad than at home. It is every where, however, of inestimable price. Like the divine quality of mercy, so finely described by THE POET of our Isle, it is "twice blessed."

"It blesses him that gives and him that takes." I am guilty of tautology in saying how much it is an innate of your bosom; and it is, I thank God, amongst the few possessions no harsh events have yet had the power to estrange from mine.

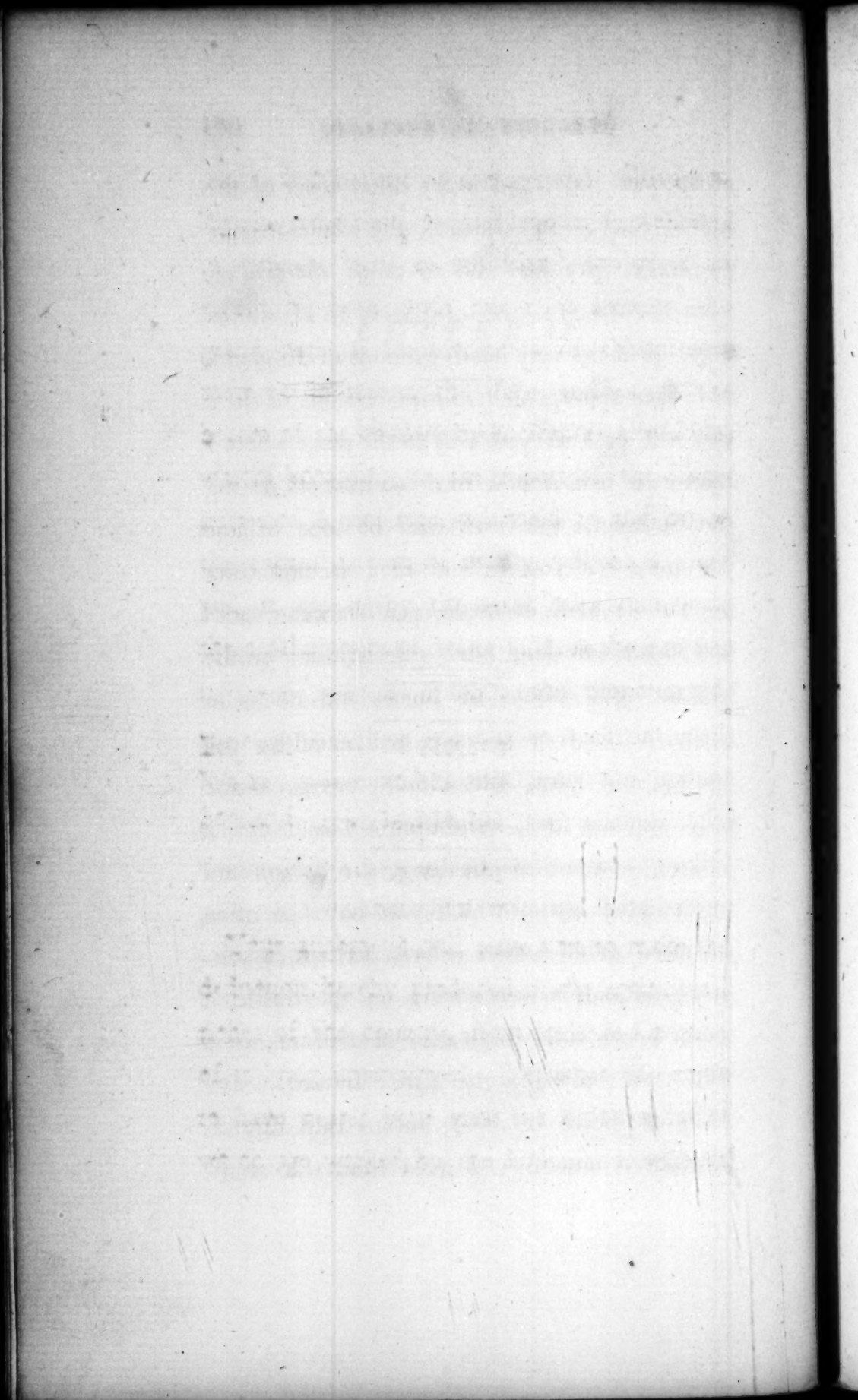
LETTER IX.

HILLINGTON, *August 16, 1798.*

DIVERGING from LYNN, it is my intention to proceed towards the sea-coast till we reach CROMER, by the route of HOUGHTON, FAKENHAM, WALSINGHAM and HOLT. I am writing this letter at the little thorough-fare village from whence I date. It is just half way betwixt LYNN and the first of the above-mentioned places. You are prepared for, and you tell me, you are pleased with my custom of winding with you occasionally through alleys, green and flowery nooks from the broad highway, to see the *face, and mind, and heart* of the country in unsuspected places,* then return to the more ostensible paths.

* "Half in a shower of clustering roses lost."

THOMSON.



of happier note, and every other lover of the humid earth,—and in truth, the whole marshy pasturage, may be said to *wear the willow*, from the eastern gate of LYNN, to HILLINGTON. But the very heath grounds of England, have their appropriate fertilities, and one of these you will pass in your way to the place where I have now paus'd to write; you cannot, during the Summer, ride over one of our village commons but you will observe it agreeably populated: herds of cattle, part standing satisfied in the refreshing pool, part reposing on the verdant sod, troops of horses and flocks of sheep, at feed or at play, enlivened by the cottage and farm, with innumerable geese and other aquatic fowl, exhibiting to your eye a striking contrast to the long, the dreary and unprofitable wastes which you have so often traversed in Germany, where, perhaps, a solitary goldfinch is seen waving on the thistle, a gaunt-horse sadly ruminating in the sand, or a lean goat browsing the fern. Indeed, a few miles of heath or moor, are to the English Traveller, sometimes a relief from the abun-

dance and beauty of the general cultivation. At the same time, it must be owned, we have, in different parts of the island, too great an extent of waste land; but it is amongst the grand national improvements of the present moment to reform the face, and enrich the bosom of the country by enclosure; a measure, which, according to the report of the Committee of Agriculture, will yield to the nation the enormous sum of twenty millions a year! and, it appears by the same calculation, that the total amount of waste lands in the Empire, is — — 21,997,001: thus proportioned.

England — 6,240,470

Wales — 1,528,307

Scotland — 14,228,224

21,997,001

Your arithmetic will serve you to make the deduction hereby produced in the agricultural riches of the country, from so large a portion of it lying unemployed. Yet when you come to have nearer your view the almost miracles which are worked by the *little* island, without

one rood of the 21,997,001 acres being brought into the national account, when you come to be an eye-witness of the spirit of commerce, of fashion, of elegance, of luxury, of private benefaction, and of the magnificence of public liberality, manifested not only in the metropolis, but in every part of the empire, your astonishment at what hitherto we *have* done, could be exceeded only by that of perceiving what we continue to do; and that too with a debt on the shoulders of our poor Britannia enough to weigh down Atlas. The very *account* of this debt is in itself almost too mighty for the grasp of the human mind, and while it displays the grand complexity of our resources seems to turn the head of the coldest calculator dizzy, as he goes on to figure its still increasing progress. It was even in the midsummer of 1796, £. 360,100,000! a sum, which, from its magnitude, has thrown even over a *description* of the means and modes of paying it, an air of ridicule. “It would require,” says an ingenious abridger and epitomist, “47,265 pounds weight in ten pound Bank notes, having 512 notes to one

pound. This sum in cash, if put into carts, each containing 1000lb. and have two horses to draw, allowing 40 feet to each cart, would load 5000 carts, and cover 37 miles in length, with a remainder of 116 carts in the 38th mile. Were it to be laid down in guineas in a line, would extend above 4,300 miles in length. In 1794 the national debt was 260 millions sterling, and if a man was to count 100 shillings per minute for 12 hours a day, it would take him 1797 years, 283 days, 9 hours, and 2 minutes. The whole of this sum being 5,200 millions of shillings, and the coinage standard being 62 shillings in the Troy pound, its whole weight will be 83 million 709 thousand and 968 pounds, which will require 41,936 carts, each to have a ton weight, to convey it to any place; or supposing a man could carry 100 pound weight from London to York, it would require 838,670 men to perform it; and if all these men were to walk in a line at only one yard distance from each other, they would cover 456 miles and a half, and 70 yards. The breadth of a shilling being one inch, and if all

these shillings were laid in a strait line, close to one another's edge, the line they would cover would be 83,070 miles, which is 8,070 miles more than double the circumference of the globe.

“ Supposing the interest of this sum to be only three and a half per cent. per ann. it amounts to nine millions one hundred thousand pound sterling.

“ Quere. Is there in the whole universe as much gold in circulation as would discharge this debt? If this is not sufficient, is there as much gold and silver in circulation as would be sufficient for the purpose?”

There is little to fix the attention of the passing traveller in this village, as to scenery or houses, except the agreeable, though obviously elaborated spot, occupied by the house and estate of Sir MARTIN FOLKES. Clumps of the enduring fir, and other hardy trees, generally indicate, at once, the ungenial temper of the soil, and the diligent hand of industry. But the particular ground on which this gentleman's hall is erected, is productive of something far

better than the proudest mansions, amidst the most fertile domains, have *always* to offer : for what so fair or rich in nature, dear Baron, as a human being placed by fortune on an eminence, amongst the poor and lowly, at once able and willing to make them happy ?

Such a man is the owner of the house and lands which present themselves to your view at the extremity of this otherwise humble hamlet.

A real knowledge of personal character is amongst the most difficult things to be got at, not merely in the limited circuit of a few leagues, but in the longest journey of human life. It lies involved in so many labyrinths, that the actual clue is torn from the hand of Truth till she herself is often wounded and lost among the mazes ; yet, innumerable pretenders are ready to connect the broken thread, each professing that his fidelity equals his zeal. It thus becomes the hardest matter, even for a deliberate traveller to gain, *in some respects*, information that is to be depended on, either as to the real character of the poor or rich ; but in *others* he cannot be mistaken. He who runs may read,

where the general voice of a country is in arms to attack, or to defend any particular member of it, whether that individual be high or low; provided, nevertheless, that individual is residuary; in which case it would be impossible for vice or virtue, in the relative characters of domestic life, of friend and neighbour, master and servant, to be concealed. And, methinks, even an *en passant* traveller may form a pretty just account if he will adhere to a plan which suggested itself to your correspondent many years ago, and which he has found correct, in the ratio of at least ten to one, where it has failed. He is never so much in a violent hurry as to render his eyes and ears as useless upon the road as if he had put them into his portmanteau, or locked them up in his trunk, to be taken out, and worn like his gala suit, only at his place of visiting, or on some grand occasion in some grand place, where it is as impossible for them to be of any use as to either seeing or hearing the truth of character in any reasonable time, as to count the drops of a shower of rain in London, where though you

see and hear them pouring on you on all sides, they seem to be all alike, and to form only one indiscriminate puddle, where the chrystal drops that have just descended from the heavens blend in a moment with the filth and ordure of the kennel, and are thereby incorporated with the very dregs of the earth. But, in the country—O, in the country,—my dear friend, ears and eyes, if a traveller will but stop a little to employ them, and call in one of man's proudest distinctions, the voice, are of real service, as to furnishing the inquirer with unequivocal truth, as to human character. We may trace the same shower till its skiey particles free themselves from the embarrassments of the world, and gain the stream, where they assert and ascertain themselves. We there see them pure as they fall from above : they succour the drooping flower, supply the thirsty herb, enrich the land on which they fall, and form its beauty, and its good. It is thus with the investigation of character. In the country, all that morally constitutes its bane or blessing, and, naturally, its beauty and deformity, lies within

reach : and, to continue the allusion, whether the drop which each individual in the parish forms, acts with the benign influence of the dew from heaven ; or, so far as his power extends, becomes tyrannous as the northern blast, and perishes what it touches, even like the breath of pestilence, its salient or noxious quality is soon generally known. Any four persons you may *accidentally* meet in your walk of liberal inquiry through a village, or town, will usually give you that knowledge respecting any character in the parish, as well in the tour of an hour as could be attained in a twelvemonth by a person who took his report from thrice the number of *chosen* men, who might be considered as the known friends or enemies of that character : because both these are under a bias, and I could not receive, unsuspiciously, the report of either : whereas, if in your chat with four residents you hear nearly the *same opinion*, whether good or bad, or even if there are three to one assenting, however differently each may express himself, you run very little hazard of being able, with the deciding powers of your

own judgment, summing up, as it were, the evidence before you, of assuring yourself you have the true measure of the object examined.

It may seem fanciful, but I have no hesitation in recommending the adoption of this mode to *all* travellers in this dark road of existence. In the usual way you are frequently referred from one partial or prejudiced person to another; these giving you a determined panegyric, and those an inveterate lampoon, till poor Truth loses both her temper and her object.

To travellers, indeed, who never stop but to change horses, or stopping, ask no questions but for the bill of fare, and the distance betwixt stage and stage, improving the intermediate time and space in sleep, dashing with the swiftness, but not with the use of a telegraph, from one place to another, or a *main-chance* traveller, whose total of information, and of object, is very properly confined to the contents of the enormous red pocket-book, and to the saddle-bag wardrobe; whose walk is from shop to shop,

with his portable shop, in shining oil-skin, holding the samples of his art, and all his eloquence exerted to recommend them:—to him, indeed, or even to the traveller, who, from pride or modesty, is averse to *ask any questions at all*, or even to *speak to strangers*—to all such my plan will appear *worse* than fanciful—formidable, impracticable, impertinent. No matter! for one person who has received my converse with rudeness, or repulsed my inquiry with a yet more sullen silence,—though even these things, I know, make up the character of the English to foreigners,—it has helped me, frequently, to discover worth, genius, and benevolence, where none of those travellers would ever have found it; and, in the various countries I have passed, has even *endeared* to my recollection many an humble cot, and lowly path-way, with many an object to share it, all of which, but for the inquisitive disposition to explore them, would, to me, at least, have “wasted their sweetness on the desert air:” and, not seldom, has it given me opportunity to recommend such of their sequestered in-

habitants, as wanted, and deserved relief, to protection more powerful than my own.

Nor is it necessary to acquire these *best* delights of the traveller by the means either of curiosity, or of obtrusion. They are procured without exertion, and are, indeed, the natural, the inevitable consequences and rewards of those passing courtesies mentioned in my last letter. The artisan at his work, the labourer at his meal, the youth at his sports, the veteran resting on his crutch, or seated on the bench of his porch to catch the vital spirit of the noon-beam, the maid or matron at her wheel beside the door, or the now busy and now vacant landlord, whose whole stock of intelligence you purchase by a small portion of his own eloquent ale or good spirits, are *all* sources of information; and, taken as they happen to present themselves to your view, will not only prove the faithful historians of the place, but they will, generally, look upon your entering with them into the urbanities of discourse,—the matter and manner being not repulsive,—as a kindness which entitles you to theirs in return.

“He that questioneth much shall gain much;” said the profound Bacon; “but especially if he apply his questions to the skill of the persons whom he asketh; for he shall give them occasion to *please themselves in speaking*, and himself shall continually gather knowledge.”

Thus, too, you gain not only genuine opinions, and an insight into the characters of persons absent,—the estimate each man holds in the mind of his fellow-villager or townsman, but of the reporters, who give you a hasty, perhaps, but strong drawn, frequently humourous, almost always sincere, sketch of themselves—of their characters, manners, habits of thinking, and modes of expression.

Suffer me to illumine these remarks by an example drawn from immediate objects.

An English landlord, though not so officious a personage as one of the *old* France—perhaps courtesy, in the *new*, is unrepblican—is far more expert than the same sort of character in Germany. Mine host of Hillington has been liberal of his knowledge and civility—both

of which he dispensed in the following manner, without charging these articles in his bill—As I was drawing on my gloves at the outward door of his house he thus began :

You are disposed I see, Sir, for a walk in our bit of a village.—Except our Hall, there is nothing worth seeing, nor that much, *for itself*.

And what is the name of the Owner ?

Sir Martin Folkes, a very worthy gentleman—my house is his—observe the sign, Sir—Hillington-Hall, and a good Hall it is, for rich and for poor—and there *goes* Sir Martin—and that's his daughter, as good as himself.—Not such a fortune, Sir, as our Mr. Coke, and our Marquis Townsend, or the new Lord of Houghton ; but has as good a heart as any of them, and that is saying a bold word for our Baronet too.

Pleased with report thus far, I thanked my reporter, and passed on to the stable, where a man was rubbing down a friend, whom I never forget.

I am not the hostler, Sir, says the man, but

I lend him a hand, such as it is, when he is out of the way; he is gone into the field for our Sir Martin—make hay while the sun shines, you know, Sir, such weather as this; but for that matter, were it deep of winter, who would not work up to his chin in water for our Sir Martin.

This Sir Martin bears a good name among you then?

I will tell you *how you shall have him* at once—and as true as this is a whisp of straw; for, old as I am, there is not a he or she in the parish have ever caught me in a lie. As to Sir Martin then, I will, as I said, tell you how you shall have him at once, and do the needful to this poor beast of yours at the same time. I can talk and work all under one.

He twisted a fresh whisp, and rubbed away.

In the first place, Sir Martin is a man remarkably good at *Justizeing*.

What, he sends some of you to the Stocks and House of Correction?

You shall hear: if any of our Farmers are hard and heavy on a poor man, he will see him

right-sided. 'Tis in vain for a Farmer to *down* with a poor man, because Sir Martin, if he deserves it, will as surely *up* him again; ay and set him on his legs stronger than ever, and make no more of the Farmer than I do of this straw;—same by the Farmer; for if he wants *right-siding, right-sided* he shall be: and so shall your honour's horse presently.

A large estate I suppose?

Where he has a penny I wish he had a pound—However he don't want—Stock and shock o' the parish is his; and what I say of him, every chick and child will say also.

A *young* Gentleman, is he not?

You shall have him at once there likewise—his eldest daughter—God bless her—a sweet young Lady, and a fine—a jot ago past the stable-door.—She is about sixteen, more or less, so, you know, *he must* be about forty, more or less—a time for all things—no great age; yet he's a Father to me that am sixty and two, and a bit besides.

How so?

You shall have him again. You must know,

that after having served one of our topping Farmers thirty and three years, comes a new man into Farm and *outs* with me—thereupon I went to Sir Martin to *justize* with him a little—Your honour, says I, you know all about me. I then *up'd* and told him my case—am I to be *outed* after this fashion, and after such a *sort* of years service? Sir Martin *thought and thought*, and *resulted and resulted*.

Never mind my good fellow, said he, when he had done *resulting*—I will take care of you—And so he did; and so he does still—and I have a house and a home, and am merry to say, God bless the donor!

Here is something, honest friend, to drink Sir Martin's health, after you have given my horse something to drink also, and then you may get him ready.

All *that* shall be done, Sir, and I will drink your health into the bargain; and if you are half as good as our Baronet, to God will you go, die when you please.

I have taken a turn round the pleasure grounds by paths in the park which are open

to the passenger; and in one of them I met three women and a boy returning from the Hall. Two had their aprons well stored, with *more* than the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table—a third had a large bowl of broth in her hand; and the lad was laden with an ample jugg of milk.

You have met with good luck this morning, my friends.

We meet as good any day when we have a mind to go for it, said one of the women, only we don't like to spur a free horse to death.

Where do you come from?

Hillington-Hall, was the answer.

I required no more; the evidence was all-sufficient for me to look at the mansion with the reverence due to philanthropy, and pronouncing as I passed—blessed be the inhabitants! Nor, in your future survey of this village, will you forget the circumstances that induce me to recommend it.

In the map of Norfolk it occupies an inconsiderable spot. It is scarce noted in the com-

mon Road-books : a few stragghing farms and cottages comprize the whole hamlet—the Hall itself is neither imposing by its grandeur, nor awful from its antiquity ; and the circumjacent country is rather scanty than prodigal of the riches and the graces of Nature ; yet shall gratitude and hospitality ennoble it to your mind, even as it will to that of your correspondent. “ It is not,” said Atticus to Tully, “ our superb Athens so delights me by its magnificent structures, as by presenting me with the images of excellent men, whilst I review the houses where they liv’d, the benches where they sat, the places where they disputed. And with pleasure, also, I contemplate their sepulchres. I shall ever love, therefore,” continued Atticus, the spot where thou Cicero wert born.” On this principle I shall ever appreciate Hillington-Hall.

The importance of private benevolence, or of tyranny, as exercised by the Esquire or Lord, or whatever other name or title the chief personage bears, in a small town or village, is beyond common calculation. He can almost

give the part of the country where he is resident, a new face : bid peace and comfort smile around his neighbourhood, or cover it with gloom. If his disposition leads him to benignity, the poorest hovel shall boast a chearful hearth, and all its tenantry sport in his influence. At little cost, he may exclude even the powers of Envy from the bosoms of the lowly, and implant the more happy inmates of gratitude and joy. He may extend his generous sway, so far as to dispense amongst those over whom Fortune has given him dominion, the lenitives of pain, the solaces of disease, and attemper death itself; nor are his good offices less eminently useful for the body than the soul: the wisdom of his precepts, or the example of his practice, discountenances the vice, and gives energy to the virtue of his dependents: their heads and their hearts thrive equally under his protectorship—and he includes in his character * the philan-

* It is on these grounds that the fashion which too many adopt, of being in a manner only *visitors* at their family mansions, and at home every where else, is to be deplored.

thropist, the physician, the moralist, or the christian.

“To the desertion of their country seats,” observes an ingenious writer, “may be traced the greater part of the evils which we lament in *every* neighbourhood.” In many, indeed too many, neighbourhoods would have been more correct: perhaps he limited the universal word “every” to MENEAGE, which includes the parish of MANACCAN, where the authour resides, and where it is truly melancholy, he tells us, to observe from every point of prospect the number of old mansion-houses or villas that have fallen into decay, in the course of the last fifty years. He even informs us, that good neighbourhood is now not only out of fashion, but that the very term is the subject of *ridicule*.

Mr. POLWHELE, even admitting that he confines this heavy charge to Devonshire and Cornwall, impresses his readers with a most startling idea respecting two fair and important counties of England, which have been long famed not more for picturesque beauties of nature, than for the urbanities and hospitalities of society. This is degrading the “Cornish hug” with a vengeance. At the same time we must perfectly agree with this writer, that, where most of the inhabitants are upon an equality, and there is scarce a resident Gentleman, as he informs us is the case in the whole peninsula of MENEAGE, the little tradesmen, peasantry, and even the great farmers gradually lose their respect for rank, and many decorums of society, for want of a living good example, which, indeed, can alone attach respectability to titles. And what repeated improprieties and occasional enormities must arise from the inclinations of uninformed minds, may be easily conceived. Nor are the inconveniences to

It is, indeed, almost impossible to enumerate the degrees of felicity which may result from an

which the clergy are subjected in such a situation, less obvious: scattered as they are over the different parishes, they have abundant reason for lamenting their solitary unsupported state. In the mean time, most of the proprietors of the good old English seats (once possess by men of family as well as fortune) pass their time in the county-towns, occupied by borough chicanery, and mining projects: while those of higher degree spend their winters in London, and their summers at some dull watering place; or, if they happen to make a visit of a month or two, to their country-seats, introduce into their neighbourhoods all the vices of the metropolis. And what can be more shocking than *tonish* voluptuousness engrafted upon mulish rusticity?—The last circumstance, indeed, is scarcely observable in the peninsula in which I reside, says Mr. P. nor in any of these particulars would I speak, exclusively, of Meneage. Other parts of Cornwall, and of England have the same cause to complain of the absence of country-gentlemen; and the common people, there, are equally headstrong and licentious. In truth, such is the nature of man, that the multitude, abandoned to “their own hearts desire,” have in all ages, and in all countries, become more and more depraved, till at length they have sunk into the deepest degeneracy.

Mr. POLWHELE has introduced these remarks in his “Old English Gentleman,” with a very interesting description of one of these deserted manor houses, or ruined ancient seats, and which, taken in a frequent, by no means universal—I trust, indeed, not general,—acceptation, must charm every reader of his poem, and will, in this place, serve as a contrast

intelligent, upright, and benevolent country gentleman, whom Providence has blessed with the means of doing good.

to the honour, virtue and happiness derived from all villas like Hillington-Hall, and a variety of others to which we are approaching :

“ While now the sounds of cordial union fail,
Where glooms the lonesome vill o’er every dale;
While floats no more the voice of castled mirth,
And scarce a cricket cheers the cottage-hearth;
Each little neighbourhood may, perhaps, afford
Some grave historian of its ancient lord—
Some hoary peasant once a pamper’d groom,
Who tells, with rueful air, the mansion’s doom;
When Sawle, in wedlock with Erizey linkt,
In his old master was at length extinct,
Where his fleet racer vanish’d from the view,
And where the last *goonbilly* perish’d too—
Some gamekeeper, who now with drooping mien,
Eyes his bare plush, alas! no longer green;
Laments his master (doom’d far off to roam,
An exile, for œconomy, from home)
And, as each feature various griefs distort,
Regrets the sad cessation of the sport,
While boys with fearless shouts around him run,
And at mid day the poacher vaunts his gun—
Perhaps some vicar, who, half-craz’d with care,
Recounts the ruin of a thriftless heir,
Pointing with signs that grief and pity mark,
To his old patron’s pale-dismantled park,

On the other hand, if he is of a harsh and despotic temper, of a basè and sordid nature, the pleasing picture here drawn, the original of which your conscious eye has a daily opportunity of seeing displayed in every part of your own signiory, would instantly change to its reverse, and spread to the utmost limit of the village despot's authority. His tenants would languish, his peasantry droop, the spacious mansion, where, like some malign demon, he resides in solitary grandeur, or amidst selfish carousals, would be annoyed by the curse of the cottagers. They would lie in wait for occasions of reprisal, either in the silent mischief of nightly depredations; or armed by wrongs, act in avowed opposition to the oppressor's wishes and commands.

Fell'd trees, where whispering airs no longer play,
And dismal windows that exclude the day;
Where harvest wak'd the pastimes of delight
So pure, as ne'er again shall charm the sight;
And drest in garb so gay was Christmas hoar,
As shall relieve his wearied eyes no more;
Unless such hospitable cheer he see
In fond idea—with the Muse and me!"

How often have I seen a pestilential wretch of this kind, even in generous England, diffuse the *aggravations* of penury, of sickness; and of misery around him ! All ages and descriptions of persons unite to produce the vexation which such a being deserves, and *can never escape* : he is the scorn of the better part of his neighbourhood, and the terror as well as scourge of the children of indigence ! But, thank heaven, much oftener have I seen amongst us the man of kinder manners operate as *a most* balmy antidote to this rural poison—I have seen childhood hang fondly on his robe, as if it were the mantle of an angel ; I have observed the youth of the country follow his steps as if they led to heaven. Towards him, too, have I noticed age hurry under the crutch, that it might not lose an opportunity of paying him the homage of the silver hair. In the slip of ground attached to the meanest shed, the wholesome herb is substituted for the thistle, which haply, a harder master caused to grow there ; a cheary faggot warms the hut within, and an uncankered rose blooms without. It is a sacred scrap of

property, a cherished morsel of independence, which many of my more fortune-favoured countrymen delight to bestow, and it makes the labourer's heart feel *proudly*, even while it reconciles him to his humble situation; he reflects that, though it is his lot to toil over a thousand acres for others, he has one dear spot which he may call HIS OWN. O, those two little words, my friend, how great is their import! and how frequently does a single acre, before which the exulting heart can place these monosyllables, out-measure kingdoms and empires! The span of ground which has been dressed by the hand of affection is often more precious to the peasant, who can say IT IS MINE, than the whole domain of his master; and the simplest flower, which that smiling pittance of earth may yield, proves a more welcome heart-gift to the bosom of her he loves, when he who presents it can say,—*it is from my own garden, and was set by my own hand*,—than if it had been the offering of a monarch. You will find in many parts of Norfolk, and, indeed, very generally, through the island, these elevations of the human character, where

as, in many other States, the subordinate, though certainly not the least useful classes of Society, so far from being encouraged, to believe, that they have a mite of property, are not even permitted to feel that they are *themselves*, in comparison of the higher orders, more than mites in the vast creation.

At a country seat in a small town, or village, generosity and avarice, loving-kindness and tyranny are as easily seen, and as plainly felt as the sun-beam and the mildew; but I consider a well-accommodated nobleman, or gentleman resident upon, or frequently resorting to, his estate, as a first-rate benefactor of mankind. In the vast metropolis, I may admire his establishment, seem for a moment, though but for a moment I hope, diminished by his situation, or be really attracted by his talents and popular qualities; but all this, in his *town house* has more or less of a grand exhibition: it gives the sensation of a *spectacle*; and, on the *gala* scale, measures to little more than the gaze of the mob, as their eyes pursue the ornaments of his carriage, or the court dress in which his natural

size and shape are encumbered and concealed, when he disenthralles himself from that carriage to make his bow at the levee.

It is chiefly at his country seat, and in the thriving farms, or comfort-brightening cottages, which encircle and rejoice around, like satellites illumined and fed by their planet, that I can offer him the tribute of my affection.—And when I have witnessed a man of this description, in the benignity of his orb effusing his rays, where their light and heat were wanted, I have frequently compared him with the most renowned conqueror, brightest wit, or most august potentate,—provided they had nothing better than the laurels of victory or genius, or the sceptre of dominion—and found him superior to them all. “After having made to pass in review before the reader,” says an ingenious writer, “the many tyrants who oppressed the earth, the many madmen who laid it waste, the many fanatics who have been deceived, it may be asked of what advantage to mankind were the conquests of Clovis, the cunning of Mahomet, the victories of Charlemagne, the

invasion of William the Norman, the valour of Godfrey de Bouillon, the prudence of Rhodolph of Hapsburgh, the politics of Charles the Fifth, the ambition of Philip the Second, and the genius of Richelieu?" Their empires, their triumphs, their conquests, their politics, these disappeared with them. Even the violent shocks they gave the world have scarcely left a trace of them. We contemplate with infinitely more pleasure the discoveries of Vasco de Gama, and Columbus, the voyages of Magellan, and of Drake; the great changes which the intrepidity of Luther and Calvin produced in the politics and religions of Europe; the labours of Copernicus and Tycho Brache, of Kepler and Galileo, the works of Bacon, Descartes, Newton and Locke; the productions of Tasso, Shakspeare, Ben Jonson, and Dryden; of Corneille, Raphael, and Michael Angelo: the study of religious truths, of the sciences, and of *Belles Lettres* have a more beneficial influence upon the mind, and produce more lasting effects, than the most intimate acquaintance with the conquests and intrigues of princes

and statesmen. But we might go much farther, Baron. We might insist, that the private gentleman who preserves the morals, and presides over the beings around him, as well by the influence of his example as his bounty, is the true glory of a nation. As far as in him lies, he repairs the ruins which have been made by the different circumstances that set men at variance: in fine, that every such person, of whatever country, of whatever persuasion, tends to RE-CREATE that order, which the anarchy of clashing interests, and the wild hurry of human passions, have brought into the world.

The most delightful object, afforded us by the bountiful Creator, my friend, is a rich and good man dispensing comfort of body, and content of soul, to the Poor, and the Unhappy.

LETTER X.

Houghton, *August*, 1798.

TILL we get within about two miles of Houghton a contracted kind of scenery prevails, but then it is that more spacious fields, ample pastures, and extended woodlands, with a road broadning to your feet, and foliage arching over your head, announce something extraordinary. By the imposing attraction of these, you enter upon the long-celebrated domain of the WALPOLES, who took their names from a town in what is called the marshland of this county. Here, Joceline de Walpole, was living in the reign of our first Richard; but Reginalde de Walpole, who flourished in the time of our first Henry, is thought to be the lineal ancestor of the present family; not that I hold the settlement of this matter quite so material as the disputed point

between "*the good men of Lynn*," whether King Henry * or King John presented the cup and sword to the corporation. It would, indeed, run Time himself out of breath, as well as you, my friend, out of patience, to follow this illustrious house, from Richard, who married Emma, daughter of Walter de Houghton, topping thus the free ancestral, and sliding down again by its ramifications till we reach the far-famed Sir Robert, whose branch put forth all the blooming honours, hereditary and acquired, and yielded its richest fruit in due season, after it first began to sprout in 1674. A thousand times more than I can make room for, about all this, as well in regard to the family under consideration, as that of Holkham, Rainhim, and fifty others, you will find curiously and laboriously set down for you in the county-histories ; yea, and in the several

* If it be true, that the *honour* of a gift is derived wholly from the intrinsic worth of the giver, it might, perhaps, puzzle the best balancers to know on which side of these royal Donors the preponderations of the *scale of honour* trepitate.

shew-books, presented to ladies and gentlemen-travellers, at the *shew-houses* by the domestic oracles in waiting, and who have related the family honours so often, that you will hear them describe the beauty of one ancestor, the heroism of another, and the bounty of a third, with as unmeaning a voice and tone as the chorister chaunts his hymn, or the school-boy chimes his lesson; looking at the same time with as unmoved a set of features, and as inveterate an aspect as the great founders of the family, whether ruff'd or whisker'd, whether in tapestry, marble or bronze. For these good reasons I shall not describe them here. Much less shall I rob the household historians of their perquisite, by leading you step by step through the apartments, beginning with the Hall of Entrance, although the ceiling and the frieze of boys were executed by Alteri; though the base reliefs are from the antique; and though the figures over the great doors and the boys over the small ones, are by Rystrack: thence to the marble parlour. And least of all shall I enter into a catalogue of the treasury which the

Picture Gallery of this seat had once to boast : because that would be to inflict on a man of your taste, the torment of Tantalus, the said treasure being now to be enjoyed only by a journey to the palace of the heir of the Imperial Purchaser.* Yet I will not refuse you such an account of this splendid edifice, as may engage your curiosity to consider it worth your notice were there no object but itself; but not till I have directed your attention to some things which your heart will deem of far more consequence, and at the same time save you the pains of hunting through formidable folios, and scarce less terrific quartos.

I will begin by the very beautiful, because chaste yet rich, concise yet copious inscription, by Horace Walpole,—of whom in his place—on the monument of a lady whose portrait will be shewn you, and which you will contemplate

* August 1779 the grand collection of pictures were removed from Houghton-Hall, the seat of the Earl of Orford, to Russia; purchased by the Empress of Russia at the sum of £45,500.

with even a tender interest, after you have thus been made acquainted with her singular virtues.

To the Memory
of

CATHERINE LADY WALPOLE,
First Wife of Sir Robert Walpole,
Afterwards Earl of Orford:

HORACE,

Her youngest Son,
Consecrates this Monument.

She had Beauty and Wit
WITHOUT VICE AND VANITY;
And cultivated the Arts
WITHOUT AFFECTATION,

She was Devout,
THOUGH WITHOUT BIGOTRY TO ANY SECT;
And was without prejudice to any party,
THOUGH THE WIFE OF A MINISTER:

Whose power she esteemed
But when she could employ it
To benefit the Miserable,
Or to reward the Meritorious,

She lov'd a private Life,
THOUGH BORN TO SHINE IN PUBLIC;
And was an ornament to Courts,
UNTAINTED BY THEM.
She died *August* 20th, 1737.

The first impression made on the mind of a classic traveller upon a first view of plantations which have been cultured, and mansions that have been erected by illustrious persons, more particularly if their celebrity has been derived from the splendour of intellectual or moral qualities, is *that*, my friend, which will impress yours, long before the doors of this noble edifice shall be opened to you by the servant permitted to shew them. With the rapidity of thought, your mind will go back to all you have heard or read of the celebrated * founder,

* There has lately been given to us, the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, by an author every way qualified to become the biographer of that great minister and extraordinary man. The performance of Mr. Cox will fill your mind with a history of the politicks not only of this country but of Europe for the space of half a century. Rejecting with equal disdain every inflated encomium and exaggerated

and those distinguished relatives who have successively possessed and ennobled it. The

assurance, the Historian conducts us through the events of Sir Robert's public and private life, with great truth and impartiality from his youth to his death. Unseduced by the voice of Friendship, Admiration or Flattery—which, at one time, gravely told us, Sir Robert was *born* a minister; at another, that he was endowed with a *genius* for calculation, and that all application was unnecessary, because he knew every thing by *intuition*—Mr. Cox informs us, that Sir Robert Walpole came early into Parliament; spoke at first indifferently, until habit and practice rendered him an able debater: that he was promoted to an office in the admiralty in the 28th year of his age; became secretary at war at thirty; was trained to business under Marlborough and Godolphin; and managed the House of Commons during the Whig administration. Being deprived of his place, he distinguished himself in opposition; was persecuted by the Tories, and considered as a martyr by the Whigs. He promoted, with unabated zeal, the Protestant succession, and was rewarded for his services with the place of paymaster of the forces by the new Sovereign, whom he had assisted in fixing upon the throne. Thus educated, and inured to business, having thus served under government, and acted in opposition, he was placed at the head of the Treasury. In this situation, adored by his family, beloved by his friends, and esteemed by his party, he was courted and idolized.

The fate of Sir Robert Walpole's character as a minister has been extremely singular. While he was in power, he was reviled with unceasing obliquy, and his whole conduct arraigned as a mass of corruption and political depravity.

inanimate objects first looked at, within and without, will soon become secondary. The

But he himself lived to see the propriety of his preventive measures acknowledged by the public. As time softened the asperities of personal animosity, and as the spirit of party subsided, there was scarcely one of his opponents who did not publicly or privately retract their unqualified censures, and pay a due tribute to the wisdom of the general principles which guided his administration. Impartial posterity has done still greater justice to the memory of a statesman, who, whatever might have been his public or private defects, maintained his country in tranquillity for a longer period, than has been experienced since the reign of James the First.

And Mr. Burke, who seems to have fairly appreciated his merits, and scanned his defects, observes, "that the prudence, steadiness, and vigilance of Sir Robert Walpole, joined to the greatest possible lenity in his character, and his politics, preserved the crown to this Royal Family; and with it, their laws and liberties to this country."

His address, moreover, was so frank and open, his conversation so pleasing, and his manner so fascinating, that those who lived with him in habits of intimacy adored him, those who saw him occasionally loved him, and even his most bitter opponents could not hate him. One of these did not hesitate to say of him, "Never was a man in private life more beloved:" and his enemies allow no man did ever in private life deserve it more. He was humane and grateful, and a generous friend to all who he did not think would abuse that friendship. His character naturally procured that attachment to his person, which has been falsely attributed

simple circumstance of knowing that many of the trees in the magnificent woods were planted

solely to a corrupt influence and to private interest ; but this shewed itself at a time when these principles were very faint in their operation, and when his ruin seemed inevitable.

Although he was thought neither to love or encourage their art, and even to neglect men of letters, our poets have been liberal of their eulogiums. Pope says—

“ Seen him, I have, but in his happier hour
Of social pleasure, ill-exchang’d for pow’r ;
Seen him, uncumber’d with the venal tribe,
Smile without art, and win without a bribe.”

And Mr. Coxe has inserted a portrait drawn by the pen of the elegant Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, from whose tribute the subsequent lines will afford you pleasure :

“ ————— form’d to govern, and to please ;
Familiar greatness, dignity with ease,
Compos’d his frame, admir’d in every state,
In private amiable, in public great ;
Gentle in power, but daring in disgrace ;
His love was liberty, his wish was peace.
Such was the man that smil’d upon my lays ;
And what can heighten thought or genius raise,
Like praise from him whom all mankind must praise ?
Whose knowledge, courage, temper, all surpris’d,
Whom many lov’d, few hated, none despis’d.”

I cannot wholly take leave of his character without clearing him in one instance of that want of political decorum, and for the derision of that public spirit for which his biographer observes, he was in general blamed with good reason,

by Sir Robert Walpole, will carry your reflections from the plantation to the planter, and all which refers solely to vegetation, however delicious its charm at other times to the senses, will give place to more profound reflections. You will take a retrospective view of the extraordinary man who continued first British Minister of State from the time that the structure was begun in 1722 to its complete finishing, inside and out, in 1735. The whole expanse of your mind will fill with the events, characters and deep public concerns which marked the epoch of his administration. The history of this little island, and of the vast continent, as connected with, and suffer me to say, in many respects, dependent on its politicks and its commerce, will croud upon you: for a while,

I allude to the political axiom generally attributed to him, that *all men have their price*, and which has been so often repeated in verse and prose, but the sense was perverted by leaving out the word *those*. Flowery oratory he despised; he ascribed to the interested views of themselves or their relatives, the declarations of pretended patriots, of whom he said, "*All those men have their price*," and in the event, many of them justified his observation.

woods which have long been the admiration of travellers, will shrink diminished before you, or be so subordinate to the governing idea, that you will be able to afford then no distinct notice; and the very first portrait you are shewn of this Minister, or of Horace Walpole, will engross your whole attention, though the keeper of the house lions, who has little time to spare for contemplative visitors, will be impatient to draw you off from Statesmen and from Bards, to her Derbyshire marble, bronze Gladiators, granite cisterns, alabaster columns, velvet beds, sleeping Venusses, bathing Nymphs, *santa Susannas* and Court beauties.

But as all these, and whatever is assembled near them, certainly deserve the notice of every traveller, and will be the principal attractions with most, I will no longer withhold the promised description; you will gain a clear idea from what follows.

The extent of the building, including the colonnade and wings, which contain the offices, is 450 feet; the main body of the house extends 166 feet. The hall, which is furnished in the

inside with stone, is a cube of 40 feet; the saloon 40 by 30 feet; and the other rooms are 18 feet high. The rustic and attic stories are 12 feet high each; under the rustic story are arched vaults. The whole building is of stone, and is crowned with an entablature of the Ionic order, with a balustrade above; and there is a cupola with lanterns, at each corner of the house. The mansion, for the compass of ground it stands on, is reckoned as finely ornamented, and as well furnished as any house in the kingdom.

The foundation-stone placed in the south-east angle, hath a Latin inscription upon it to the following purport. "Here, *that* Sir Robert Walpole, with whom thou, posterity, shalt not be unacquainted, hath fixed *me* to stand, as the foundation of a seat, designed to be built in his native country, the 24th day of May in the year 1722. God grant, that after its master, to a mature old age, shall have long enjoyed it in perfection, his latest descendents may safely possess it, in an unimpaired condition, to the end of time!"

To this inscription, has been annexed the subsequent morsel of morality. "One would think Sir Robert, had in his thoughts, the uncertain state in all ages and countries, of *Prime Ministers*, and of the *superb structures* built by them in the height of their power."

Neither shall the august anecdote be omitted of one of your German Emperors, who being in England when Duke of Lorrain, was entertained at Houghton with the most magnificent repast that it is said was ever given in this kingdom; a right patriotic banquet too, loyal as liberal, for, it seems, all the fish, and all the fowl, and all the game, and every other viand, was of the produce of Old England, and its domestic appendages! yea, and the variety, such as was never before known or collected at one table. Even relays of horses were provided on the roads to bring rarities from the remotest parts of the Empire!

In the way from Syderstone, the woods appear to the greatest advantage; they are seen to a great extent, with openings left judiciously in many places, to let in the view of more

distant plantations, which changes the shade and gives them that solemn brownness that has always a happy effect. It appears to give a congenial colour to thought, and the hue most favourable to meditation.

The woods, which are seen from the south-front of the house, are planted with great judgment, to remedy the defect of a flat country. The trees are so disposed as to appear one beyond another in different shades.

Having banquetted your taste and feelings in a survey of this stately Pile and all that there meets the eye, you will allow me to conduct you to other interesting objects. I have to beg then, you will, in idea, accompany me in a walk across the park, by the newly-projected grand entrance, to the place where all greatness but that of the soul must fade away,—the place of sepulture.

Houghton-church is a neat gothic building in the full view of the hall, thus furnishing a picturesque and moral object to the living proprietors.

I am attended in my visit to this sacred

spot by the village-clerk, who is another of those original beings so frequently to be met with in England, and who is at this moment so singularly blending an account of himself with his information of others, that if I can describe both, as well as he has done,—and that I may the more vividly do so, I have, as usual, my pencil in my hand—you will gain the *truth of character*, through all the quaintness and oddity of the reporter, better than if Biography was to address you in all her dignity; though she were to wait on you arrayed in her long robes, sweeping into their folds all the pomps and vanities of posthumous panegyric.

“You come on a remarkable day, Sir Stranger,—birth-day of his Royal Highness-ship, George, by the Grace of God, Prince of Wales; and on that of our Audit-Feast; and moreover, the day before we begin harvest;—so ten of his Highness-ship’s father’s pictures set in gold, have been given by order of our new Lord,—and the Lord love him for it,—to drink his Highness-ship’s health, and success to harvest. You took me just in the right nick,

Sir Stranger :—was beginning to be merry there at the King's Head ; merry but wise ; later i' the day, you might have found me *non-compos'd a-bit*, for to-morrow, as I said, begins harvest ; and harvest comes but once a year, Sir Stranger ; and if a man don't get, as I may say, a little *sun-burn'd* here i' the noddle, before he sticks sickle into corn, why the whole stack will catch cold before it gets into sheaf,—that's our Norfolk notion,—so we treat with a little of last year's corn—out of the barrel,—hope no offence, Sir Gentleman Stranger.

None in the world, Mr. Clerk.

Clerk, Sir Gentleman, is only my title ; my name is Jarvis ; and I am, moreover, Sexton as well ; and more than that, I am the greatest fool in Houghton-Parish ; nay, in this whole hundred of Gallow where it stands ; and if any man can prove himself a greater numps than Jarvis, let him come forth.

How so, my friend ?

Look at those pretty deer staring at you, Sir Stranger, while some stamp their little feet, as though they were angry at you, while others

trot away as if they were frightened at you, and some keep nibbling the grass as if they cared nothing about you; by the same token, I have seen as fine a head of deer in this park as in any of Norfolk; and, would you believe it, I had, for a *sort** of years, the care of all those dappled fellows, and hundreds upon hundreds more; I was their play-fellow, and their friend, Sir Gentleman, and the poor fools knew me, and would follow me, and eat out of my hand, and I do really think, they loved me as well as they do one another:—as well as that doe at feed under the elms, does the fawn by its side:—and when i' the venison time, I was obliged to single my marks from the herd, I went skulking about the park like a thief;—and for that matter so I was, you know;—I felt just as if I was going to shoot a child; and when I hit any of them, they cried just like one:—O, 'tis a barbarous piece of work, Sir Gentleman!—and when I have seen 'em, just as they were

* *Sort* of years, *sort* of money, &c. is a word in constant use amongst the unlettered classes of people in Norfolk.

dying, looking pitifully in my face, with the tears in their eyes, I thought I deserved to be shot myself.

But how came your Lord to part with so good a park-keeper?

He, part! God love the stone that covers him! I will shew it you presently. I parted myself. I was not only park, but game-keeper, —and a better thing besides,—Lord George's right-hand man, as he used to call me. First thing in a morning was, Jarvis, bring my boots; Jarvis, my slippers; how fare the greyhounds, the deer, the horses, and more than all, the sheep, hey Jarvis? and all just as freespoken and kindly as I am to you, and so on for years; hasty and hot a little now and then, to be sure; but give him his way, that youngster of a fawnling skipping across our path, might lead him; but cross-grain him, and one of our bulls,—and there is a mad one in the meadows,—could not match him for raving and roaring. Let him run on, he would stop before he got at you, and give you his hand instead of his foot; and I, that knew all this, and that loved him as

I did my soul, and might have kept my place till his death-hour. I—to go and say to him one day, as I did! Lord George, if you don't like me, leave me, Lord George; if you think you can mend yourself, try. And what, Sir Stranger, do you think he did upon this? Up's with a table, and if I had not run off and shut the door, would have smash'd my saucy sconce as I hear he smash'd the table, and there would have been an end of Jarvis.

Why did you not return, and by submission, try to make your peace, Jarvis?

Afraid and ashamed, Sir Stranger,—and you would have been afraid too,—he glared at me like a lion, and would have devoured me just as easily. O, Lord George! what a terrible Lord George you was in a passion! and O, Jarvis, Jarvis, what a d—d numps must you be, who knew this, not to let him have it out with you! If a servant, or tenant, or neighbour, would but give him time to turn himself round in one of his high winds, he would be as mild as a May morning; but when once he turned

any one away for *cross-hoppling*, never took him again.

That was an unfortunate day for you, friend Jarvis.

So my brother got the place, and held it to my Lord's death, and holds it still; for our last Lord, Lord Horace, one of your scholar gentry, though we never saw much of him, indeed, after he was lorded, kept all the old servants; and our new Lord has not yet said, *you must go*, to any of them; so I suppose they are to stay. Ay, Sir Stranger, it was a sorrowful thing, to think I never afterwards could hear the best master, and the best man in the world, say, how do the greyhounds? how fare the deer? and how are all the people in Houghton-village? with Jarvis, or good Jarvis, and sometimes, friend Jarvis, at the end of the question. It wasn't the losing the place, so much; but never again being *about* such a master; having free *regress* and *ingress* into his *own room*; or if I saw him in the park, gardens, plantations, or what not, running to him, speaking to him on

this case, and that case—such a poor man is foot-sore, and should rest, Lord George; such a poor woman is sick, and wants sommut more comforting than doctors or doctor's stuff, Lord George; poor Snap must have a holiday; Spring is fresh as a daisy again; Smoaker is now a match for any they can bring against him, Lord George. No, Sir Gentleman, this was all over; and then to lose going of his errands i' the parish, or farther a-field, as case required; a bottle of wine to one; a broth-joint to another; a bit of money to another; Jarvis, go and see how poor Will is; carry something good to Tom's wife. Yes, Sir Stranger, to lose all this after such a sort of years, being his kindness-carrier, as I may say, to half the country, for wherever there was a want, there would go Lord George or his kindness-carrier. But after I had shot my fool's bolt, Sir Gentleman, no more of all this for me; if I met him in my path, I dropt my head and slunk off like a hound who had been sheep worrying; and I have sat moping under a hedge, like a beggar going to steal the linen, or hid myself i' the

woods as if I wanted to rob the house, though, God knows, I only went there because I was ashamed to be seen; and many is the good cry I have had there, all alone, though I suppose, at my age, Sir Stranger, you think I ought to be ashamed of that. But this would not do long; so I went to live in another family, because I hated at last, to see myself upon the grounds, where I was as useless as a nettle in a garden, and worse, for nobody thought it worth while to pull me up or knock me down; —Heigho!—and the deer too, they seem'd to join against me.

A fallen favourite you know, Jarvis. I know what you mean, having, thank God, a pretty tightish understanding in the natural way. I was fallen out of favour sure enough, for Tall Jack, one of the old standards,—a brave buck, —when I came, like a fool one day, and walked a matter of twelve miles, just to look at the old park, shook his antlers at me, and stampt his foot several times, and stood as stiff as a ram, as much as to say—“You have no business at Houghton now, old Jarvis.”—But, since that

time, I have got to be Sexton—Clerk, and by coming backwards and forwards to this church, the dappled chaps, some of them get round me; yet, I sometimes think, it is more for a little prog I now and then carry in my pocket, to coax them, rather than for love of me as it used to be;—heigho!—heigho!—Well, now if you please, Sir, we will go inside my church.—Poor Lord George! we have him there still. It was my lot to do for him after he was dead, *however*. I buried him. Would to God he was alive, to look at me again, though he looked like a lion. I would not run away from him again, I promise you. Angry or pleased, I never saw such another friend, nor landlord, nor master, and if you don't choose to believe me, ask every man, woman and child you meet, that knew him, in the country."

We had rather strolled and sauntered in different directions near the chapel, than moved towards it, during the greatest part of the above conversation; from which, I trust, you will catch a more striking likeness of Lord George Orford, than from any, or from all

the portraits, you will be shewn of him at the hall. You will see the genuine features of that truly worthy nobleman's soul, in their best lights, thinly shaded, if they may be called shades, by his singular manners, and by the one dark, yet *passing* shadow of a sudden temper. The painter, it is true, has etched without art, but every touch is a stroke of nature, and had you seen his figure, or heard his voice, while they were thus employed, you would swear to the whole drawing being an original. Indeed, to *two* originals, for he would have presented you with an admirable sketch both of the living and of the dead. I had abundant opportunity, before I left Houghton, to find, that the master and the man were given with equal fidelity of pencil: of this, I will offer some pleasing evidence, before we take our leave of this interesting spot.

But I must allow you and myself a pause; having just transcribed this letter at the Inn, from my pencil'd minutes of friend Jarvis's discourse, which, I offer you as nearly as possible, in his own words, and my landlady,

Mrs. Kendal, assures me, she could swear to their being the words of neighbour Jarvis. They are, however, those of an odd, but tender-hearted fellow, and I hope, he will recommend himself to the patronage of his new Lord.

LETTER XL

HOUGHTON, *August.*

I PROCEED in my transcriptions from my penciled note-book ; which, both at home and abroad, I have considered as the vehicle in which I place the unassorted ears I gather in the fields of observation ; a plan which has the advantage of collecting my stores from the spots where they grew, and allows the opportunity of selecting and separating, winnowing and preserving, at more leisure, after my growing stock is housed. But, though I always perform these several tasks to the best of my judgment, not only *before* I carry the grain to the *public* market, but before I send my detached sheaves to you, my judicious friend, in the way of sample, I can no more promise you, that I do not, from oversight, send you some-

times a poppy with the corn, sometimes an idle weed with the balmy herbs, and sometimes a useless flower with the verdant loads, than the farmer can undertake to warrant *his* hay, or *his* wheat free from a thistle, a weed, or a worm-bite. Neither of us can do more than aver, that no pains are spared to prevent these intermixtures becoming objects of *weight* or consequence in the general bulk of our commodity; and, as to myself, I may fairly be allowed to observe, that it has all along been, and will continue to be, my custom, to submit my gatherings to the inspection of some of our most approved judges in the *quality* of all sorts of literary grain, from the most golden ear of intellectual wheat, to the minutest blade of grass, and simplest flower in the abundant garden of nature, *previously* to my conveying them to you. Thus guided by their judgment in the first instance, and assisted, in the second, by yours, I think I may be permitted, in the language of our English merchants, to “hope you will find the accounts correct, *errors excepted.*”

Immediately on entering the chapel, Jarvis went hastily to the part of the aisle where the ashes of his master were deposited. "Here he lies, Sir Stranger," said he, pointing to the plain stone that covered the remains: "here he is—I help'd to put him down with my own hands—and mine were not the only tears that dropt upon his coffin as it was lowering: if it had been all night in the dew it could not well have been wetter. I don't often cry, but I did then like a beat baby—and the thought on't often makes a child of old Jarvis still." It does honour to his memory, and to your own feelings at this moment, my good Jarvis, said I, perceiving his eyes were filling. "And here," cried Jarvis, "is the great Sir Robert—there his first lady—here his second—and there Lord Horace—and I put HIM in too."

As I moved a few steps to inspect the marble of the latter, my foot slid insensibly on the stone sacred to Lord George—"Don't tread upon him, Sir Gentleman," said Jarvis, suddenly, but very gently plucking my coat—"Its foolish enough, you'll say, but I never set

foot on it myself if I can help it—but then to be sure I was but his serving-man—yet, I be always so bold to keep off strangers when I can; and many's the douse I have given the boys and girls, whose fathers and mothers he gave house and home to, whensomever I have seen them run and scuttle over it, as if it was the grave of one of my Lord's greyhounds; or as if it held the bones of such a fellow as his humble servant, Jarvis."

The most natural testimony of the speaker's full heart followed this expression. He bowed at every word he uttered of the last line, and it was precisely such a bend, both of the head and body, as a comparative sense of situations betwixt master and servant, excites in a grateful and respectful domestic: and I am convinced it was just the sort of reverence which Jarvis had often paid in the life-time of his Lord: for the features, the air, and the accent, of a dutiful adherent all harmoniously accorded. At the end of a very long pause which ensued, he shook his head, and in a sigh-retarded articulation, exclaimed—"Little and great must all

go, to be sure, but I wish I could have got cleverly at the speech of you before you *lost yourself*, Lord George, just to have heard you say—Jarvis, I don't think any more of your sauce!—or that you could but know how I have mop'd about it since—may be, though, you do know it, for 'twill be a bad job for other folk's souls, if yours, Lord George, an't in heaven."—The head continued shaking till the owner of it arrived at this consolatory close, when, seeming to be inspired with the cheering influence of the sentiment, he lifted up his drooping figure; and cried—" 'Tis nothing but dust, Sir Stranger, that lies here, and a man loses his time in moaning thus for a heap of bones, which, to be sure, we are all born to be, gentle and simple, you and I! So now let me tell you something about this fine old affair a little farther on."

He pointed to a stone coffin. "That, too, is a Walpole," added he; "part, you see, broke: eleven years back I got a piece of his rib. He was taken up in Brumsthorpe church-yard, and brought here—was one of the Nor-

wich bishops, with the date on his foot—and that's all we know of *him*. Lookee, there are the 'scutcheons of our Orfords—Sir Robert's and Lord George's—and there is the last the scholar Lord's, not yet put up."

And are there to be no other monuments erected to them?

"None, Sir Stranger."

This intelligence interested my mind, and if I were not fearful of hazarding too bold a figure, should add, inspired my Muse. By her *assistance* at least on my return to Mrs. Kendal's, I finished from the note-marks, made as I repassed the park, the tributary lines which follow:

LEFT IN THE PARK CHAPEL

OF

HOUGHTON-HALL, NORFOLK,

WHERE

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE, LORD GEORGE,

AND HORATIO WALPOLE,

ARE BURIED.

LONG for three * favour'd Heirs of deathless fame,
 As many nations have confirm'd their claim ;
 And thrice three Muses—all the sacred nine—
 With lavish incense, have adorn'd the shrine :
 And shall not one of England's Bards be found,
 To mark with awful verse the holy ground,
 Where three of British birth, and high renown,
 All of one noble stock, and all our *own*,
 Enrich the Tomb?—the first, of skill profound
 The subtle politics of Man to sound,
 To trace his mazy nature to its source,
 Explore his shallows, try his depth and force ;

* Three Poets, in three distant ages born, &c. &c.

DRYDEN'S EPITAPH ON MILTON.

And good as wise—the next—let ev'ry art
That faithful Nature aids, and ev'ry heart
His bounty warm'd, in grateful sighs declare
He felt for all the Poor a father's care,
Taught the glad Horn of Plenty to expand,
And pour'd a broader blessing o'er the land.
Taste, learning, elegance, the last endear,
And his least honour to have died a Peer.

In the cold vault, shall these neglected lie
While pomp's vast pyramids assault the sky?
Yes, let those poor ones who have nought but birth,
To mark they e'er had being here on earth,
The marble blazon, tell, with vain parade,
The scoffing world—*Here we proud worms are laid!*
But for the learn'd and wise, the brave and just,
Weak is the column, feeble is the bust;
Superfluous ev'n the Muse! and yonder Hall,
Its towers sublime, its solid base, shall fall;
While all that Virtue, all that Genius gave,
Immortal powers! shall triumph o'er the Grave:
Their words, their works, their deeds embalm THEM
best,
And REAR A MONUMENT IN EV'RY BREAST.

*LETTER XII.**HOUGHTON, August.*

THE good clerk was little disposed to break in upon the reflections that filled my mind, as he returned with me to the inn, being himself inclined to silent meditation: on re-joining him, however, after two or three convivial hours which he passed at the birth-day and audit feast, the quaint hilarity of his character, which opened our first views of him returned, and he was earnest to know if he could give me any farther pleasure. To ask this well-meant question, he came from the festive throng into the room where I had been throwing upon paper the verses which concluded my last letter. He had obviously dispelled the gloom collected at the chapel, where he bewailed the dead, and by some generous draughts, had since warmed his heart towards the

living. He now came with a hope I would not refuse to go into the banquetting apartment to drink the health of his Highness-ship, George Prince of Wales, the new master and mistress of Houghton, Lord and Lady Cholmondeley, and success to the sickle—making a very respectful, though not quite correct, bow, for each of the objects thus to be toasted. Having promised this, I was proceeding to place my papers in a small *ecritoire* which is always my *compagnon de voyage*, when the page on which I had written the monumental verses falling on the floor, he picked it up with great respect, and said, as he delivered it to me, he fancied, it was full of *poetals*. He instantly repeated, that it had pleased God, though he was a poor fellow, to give him a fairish understanding in the natural line, and that he had made a *poetal* or two himself: one on a famous dog of Lord George's, which beat every thing, both at Swaffham and Newmarket, and one the night Lord George was buried. I told him I would gladly exchange with him on that subject, by reading my *poetal* to him, if he would read or repeat his

to me. "Yours then, Sir Stranger, first: my head is a little noncompos'd at present."

I then read to him what I had the pleasure to insert in my last letter; and I dare say his *poetals*, which did not, however, return to his memory in time for me to see them, were not more curious than his *criticals*, which I received in the very words I will give them to you, Yet it is not in written, nor, indeed, in any oral, language, but his own, that I can express or figure him. Though a little noncompos'd, as he called it, that is, inspirited by circulating the jovial rounds to the healths of the Prince, the new Lords of Houghton Hall, and success to the sickle, just enough to oblivate the gloom which the scene in the church had produced, the quaint gravity of his voice, and the innocent conceits of himself, mixed with his opinion of others, came to the exact point of being pleasant. One bumper too little, I have observed, will make an Englishman of this class, sullen, incommunicative, or rudely talkative, and one too much renders him insufferably loquacious; while the medium glass seems to

invigorate his active, and excite his dormant good qualities, or talents, but drinking deep, or not drinking at all, discloses all that are bad and offensive, making him a downright saucy or sulky fellow.

At friend Jarvis's desire I read the verses twice over, "because *poetals*," he said, "hit a poor man i' th' noddle, harder than *prosals*; at first I can't so cleverly get at 'em." On the second reading he had comments for almost every couplet. Accept a few:—

"All of one noble stock, and all our own."

Line 8.

On telling him these applied to three of the Walpoles, he cried, "Sir Stranger, you are right, as to that *poetal*—for they are all our own, sure enough—but as you say, there were three times three of them Muses. I have met with some of they in one of our books in the library, about the gods and goddesses; though there was, as I thought, a pretty deal of deviltry in them, too—and as for the goddesses, I think a little whipping at the cart's tail would have

been too good for most of they. I should be sorry to have my old dame half as bad as the best of 'um. By the bye," added he, "three times three is just the rounds we have been making out of the jolly birth-bowl below, to his Highness-ship, and the other honourships, the founders of the feast, and I hope, Sir Gentleman, you will help us off with three times three rounds more—when you have got through your poetals. So, pray, read on—but don't hurry—' Learning is better than house or land,' ay, or punch either."

I smiled and proceeded :

" The next, let ev'ry art
That faithful nature aids, and ev'ry heart
His bounty warm'd, in grateful sighs declare
He felt for all the poor a father's care."

Lines 13, 14, 15, 16.

That, observed I, is designed as a tribute to the goodness of your noble—

" Lord George," interposed the learned clerk, " you need not tell me that.—Before I have done with you, please God, I'll shew you more of this, not only in printed book, but

in other guess places, worth all the poetals that ever was—yours, Sir Gentleman, into the bargain :”

“Taste, learning, elegance, the last endear,
And his least honour to have died a Peer.”

Lines 19, 20.

“Died a Peer—there you hit him,” quoth Jarvis, “he was but an Honourable before—a nation great *poetal*, though; and a good Sir gentleman, which is better.—One of the sups of broth I used to take from the Hall kitchen to one of Lord George’s poor bodies is worth all them devilcome gods, and goddesses too—muse madams into the bargain.

“While pomp’s vast pyramids assault the sky.”

Line 22.

“Piradims !” repeated the clerk; “ay, there you hit him again, Sir Stranger, but please God, I will know more about it by next Sunday. As you said, the poetals are to be left in my church”—I had told him so—“I’ll have at them at bye-hours all the week—for you may see I have a little meaning of these things in me—but must not let ’em lie about to

be catch'd up every Sabbath by our Houghton-folk, who could no more make 'em out than the old Walpole in the stone coffin I shewed you—except the steward—Mrs. ——— the housekeeper, and Mrs. Kendal, my landlady here below, who has no bad gift at *poetals* herself.”

“ And rear a monument in every breast.”

Last line.

“ I am sure,” exclaimed Jarvis, fervently, “ Lord George has one in mine! ay, and I will have every word of the poetal here in my head, before my new lady comes, which is to be in October; and till then I will clap 'um in my prayer-book, and the first Sunday morning she comes to church they shall be laid on her ladyship's Pess, and I will tell her they were left for the family by a travelling poeter: and I'll tell her ladyship your name, Sir Stranger, if you like to say who you be.”

That is not necessary, but you may say, if you please, they were left by the Gleaner.

“ Very well, Mr. Gleaner,* and so I will—
and for that matter, about that time I shall
be a Gleaner myself—but first and foremost I
shall be Mr. Harvester—and by the same token
only hear how they farmer-gentry in the par-
lour, and we worky-folk in the kitchen, roar
out the sickle-songs, as we call them—enough
to turn the heads of poor Mrs. Kendal, and her
well-look'd daughter—but, as I said, harvest
comes but once a year—so, what say you, Sir
Stranger ?—huzza ! there they work it, huzza !

* I am here to mention the good Jarvis's disappointment,
as it has been reported to me since these papers were sent to
press. After preparing, rehearsing, and getting perfect in
the eloquent speech with which the learned clerk was to
introduce these verses, in the delivery of which he expected
to divide, at least in equal proportions, the honours of the
Bard—after he had made himself as mellow in every syllable
of them as in his amen, he unluckily mentioned the circum-
stance to some of the head servants, who advised they might
be given to my Lady *before* she went to church; upon
which the learned clerk yielded them up to the groom of the
chambers, *without any speech at all*, for want of which all
our honours, of course, came to nothing; and it is not more
probable that my friend the clerk has forgot his speech, than
that the groom has forgot to deliver the verses, seeing they
were as much out of his way as for old Jarvis to become
running footman.

—a drop after your poetals, won't be amiss—
huzza! his Highness-ship for ever”—

The cheary echos, and choruss'd burthens from below, now had their full effect upon every muscle in the face, and, indeed, in every limb of my right learned clerk and commentator, and that I might not any longer detain him from joining the happy groupe, I delivered him the monumental lines, to be presented with “what flourish he might.” And after putting them very cautiously in his pocket-book, between, as he said, two bans of marriage, and notice of a parish meeting for the next Sunday, I rose to accompany him down stairs; where two as jovial crews had assembled as I ever had the delight to see happy: more especially, as is usually the case, those in the kitchen; at the supreme presidency of which our learned clerk soon placed himself. They were gathered together in the inn facing the old grand entrance, which was built by Sir Robert Walpole, and it may be fairly doubted, whether since the foundation of his splendid hall, or this his humble inn, there has

met, on any occasion, a set of more blissful beings. Amorous and agricultural songs were mixed, unclouded joy shook the loud note as from their heart of hearts, and the louder the sound, the truer the joy.

“Home, celebrate Harvest-home,”—an old field ditty in great favour with the English peasantry, was encored and re-encored with that vehemence of applause, which marks in a particular manner, the labouring parts of mankind when loosed a little from toil to joy, which they describe by a mixture of ungovernable noises, from hands, feet, and voice.—This is the point of time which opens the whole soul of this useful class of men; throws hand into hand, heart into heart, and divides good-fellowship from drunkenness. It is a crisis when a lover of nature, and of his species, whatever might be the state of his own mind, unless his temper is harder than the severest misfortune, *must* “gather bliss to see his fellows bless’d”—and at such a moment have I recently come, dear Baron, from viewing this care-free groupe of beings: every one of whom, in the pauses from

drink, dance and song, bore genuine evidence of the high and endearing qualities of the late and present possessors of Houghton-Hall. The *groundless* fears of some of the domestics, from the apprehension that old adherents of the family would be dismissed to make way for new—the goodness of their new Lord in continuing the generous custom of their Lord to receive, for the rent of each house in Houghton-Village, a shilling instead of a guinea—the school bounty, and establishment instituted by Lady Cholmondeley, for poor male and female children—with their pretty uniform dresses, in preparation for the day on which they are first to have the honour of appearing before their patroness—these, and various other records of the existing charities and benevolencies were all poured forth, with tones, and with looks, that ratified the intelligence. It was AN HONEST MOMENT; and a spectator might securely have given in to the court of humanity every syllable of the evidence on oath: and it will make your heart glow, my friend, as it has already done mine. Would you had been at my side to have shared

it : alas ! many an hour must intervene before even this imperfect report reaches you ; and then it will be but as a fair but faint shadow of the living pleasure I have tasted ; but its counterpart will wait your coming. On every genial return of the year, you may enjoy the substance, either at the place from which I am now writing, or at some other. Thus the felicity of our peasantry, and the liberality of our Nobles, are not merely local ; those who bless, and those who are blessed are widely diffused. You will meet with heart-touching instances of both ; and while nature groans, and philanthropy is bleeding in almost every other land, and those amongst us who have never—as alas ! we too often have, my friend, heard those groans, or seen that blood, raise the voice of discontent, you will be convinced that we may proudly say, that the poorest subject of the realm of England,—amidst all our foes, abroad and at home—all our political evils, or religious errors—and I not only confess, but will discover to you many of each—our very day-labourers,—our children of the plough and of the

flail—nay, even those who, literally, can neither toil nor spin,—our children of age, of infirmity, and of misfortune, are better secured in their domestic enjoyment—in the dear and fertile land whereon they live, in their morsels of property upon it—in their sickness and their sorrows better consoled and administered to, than either the rich or poor in any other country of the globe.*

You will more than forgive, my friend, you will welcome these patriot effusions of a heart, which, though it feels an enlarged wish for the happiness of mankind, more affectionately beats to Britain; not, simply, because it is

“ Link'd to that heart, by ties for ever dear;”

* This great truth is beautifully touched by one on the long list of our illustrious female living writers: of whom, you will expect to hear more in their place.

“ ——— that lov'd isle

Where freedom long has shed her genial smile.

Less safe, in *other* hands, the triple wall,

And massy portal of the gothic Hall,

Than in that favoured isle the straw-built thatch,

Where Freedom sits, and guards the simple latch.”

HELEN MARIA WILLIAMS.

but, because, having had various opportunities of seeing, and residing in many other popular countries, and making on each comparative observations, not those of an enthusiast or of a bigot, but of a slow, patient, and pausing experimentalist, I must again, and as often as every fresh cause offers, pronounce England, with all its imperfections on its head, THE UNRIVALLED COUNTRY. I will venture to add, no man that has at any time been, or that *now* * is within the shelter of its protecting arms, has "seen its like."

Non have I ever yet conversed with a travelled person, or read a travelled Authour—supposing him to have possessed the degree of *health* which fairly tints every object, who has not been of this opinion—whatever his character—whatever be his country. The rule, therefore, is, I am persuaded, general: and I cannot allow, as exceptions, those

* You will permit your Correspondent, as you have the book, to refer you to an "Ode on the Benevolence of England," in the first volume of his former *Gleanings*.

ephemera who fly from one clime to another, with the idle and undetermined course of a butterfly, and who, if you will permit me the use of a facetious expression, are as completely ignorant of the real good which a country contains, as a cat or monkey running over a harpsichord is of the use of the keys; from a skilful touch of which, even were it an indifferent instrument, the true artist would bring *some* sweet sounds.

P. S. You will more than accept, you will welcome, a brilliant passage from an animated foreigner, who, while he confirms, illustrates the exulting assertions of the foregoing letter; assertions, my friend, which, on so many different occasions I already have been, and, I trust, shall again, be called upon, in the character of a faithful delineator, an intrepid defender of my country, to maintain. And so firmly do I feel myself standing on this ground, that I am ready to meet whatever wit, eloquence, ambition, ridicule, or enmity could oppose to the unadorned, the almost naked arms of truth.

MALLET DU PAN, and the reputation that is associated with him, cannot be unknown to you. This slight mention of his name will bring him to your mind, as the indefatigable and ingenious opposer of anarchy, and the French Directory; a native, I believe, of Switzerland, that stupendous and romantic country with which you are so enamoured, and justly, whether it be considered topographically or intellectually. He left Switzerland just in time to escape the requisition, made by the five new despots of Paris to their Helvetic dependants, to deliver up every man of genius who was their adversary. Soon after his arrival in the country where every man of every nation is safe, and where all genius is honoured and rewarded, he published the *prospectus* of a work, called "*Mercure Britannique*," with the avowed purpose of being the public accuser of the French Directory, and vigilant detector of all their falsehoods and fabrications. He has kept his word; began, and has continued every fortnight an animated commentary on the conduct of France, and the other powers of Europe, including a

general and accurate history of the times, and drawing the characters of the chief actors in the hurly-burly of this amazing scene. His book will be a most valuable source to the future historian, and I am happy to inform you that my countrymen have shewn themselves sensible of the merit of such a writer. You will find a copy of his work, so far as it has proceeded, in the literary packet I am preparing for the first safe opportunity. In the mean time, the passage I have promised, and which will be recommendatory of the rest, shall now be transcribed :

“ J’ai laissé le Continent, persuadé que l’Angleterre touchoit à sa perte, & que la France alloit l’engloutir dans ses chaloupes canonnières. Les plus courageux, en lui accordant la possibilité d’une résistance extérieure, la livroient aux fléaux d’une révolution interne : l’un gémissoit sur la ruine de son commerce, l’autre sur celle de ses finances ; & si l’on admiroit son heroïsme, on en plaignoit l’inutilité.

“ Quelle surprise d’observer, en débarquant, que la guerre la plus terrible à laquelle aucun

empire ait été exposé, produit mille fois moins de risques, de trouble, de tristesse, & de crainte, que les charmes de la paix dans lesquels se bercent en frissonnant tous les concurrens à la concorde avec la République Françoisè !

“ C'est avec 800 vaisseaux de guerre, 150 mille matelots, trois cent mille hommes sous les armes, 50 millions sterling versés annuellement, par le patriotisme, l'opulence & la libéralité publique, dans la balance des ressources; c'est avec des victoires périodiques, dont les annales de la marine d'aucun peuple n'avoit encore présenté l'éclat; c'est en affermissant tous les ancres d'une admirable constitution, à mesure que l'ennemi tente de les soulever, que l'Angleterre attend sans crainte comme sans impatience, l'issue de ses dangers.

“ Lorsqu'on voit des flottes innombrables apporter à l'Angleterre les tributs de l'univers, & renouveler sans interruption la richesse nationale, sous la protection d'une force navale devant laquelle les François osent à peine aujourd'hui hasarder quelques pirates; lorsqu'on

contemple ces merveilles d'industrie, de travail, & d'activité, toutes les sources d'opulence & de grandeur maintenues & augmentées, à côté des obstructions, de la langueur, du découragement, des désastres, qui ont ruiné depuis six ans le commerce & la richesse des nations les plus florissantes; lorsque de Londres aux montagnes d'Ecosse, du trône à la chaumière, du parlement à la plus chétive municipalité, dans les comptoirs comme dans les palais, chez le *citadin* le plus obscur comme chez le pair de la Grande Bretagne, on observe un sentiment & un dévouement uniformes; tant de lumières unies à un attachement si enthousiaste à la patrie & à ses loix, un accord si heureux entre le gouvernement & la nation, & toutes les conditions en harmonie, repousser d'un commun effort le féroce étranger qui menace leur liberté & leur bonheur, on s'agenouille devant la Providence qui transmet cette leçon vivante à tous les peuples, comme un Phare de secours & de préservation."*

* It will gratify your eager desire of attaining a yet

“ I left the continent under an apprehension that England was on the brink of ruin, and

greater knowledge of the powers of the English Tongue, to read a liberal *translation* of the above into our language, whereby you will have a fair opportunity of perceiving the possibility of retaining the *spirit*, without licentiously deserting the *letter* of a bold and glowing original: The examples, certainly, bear no proportion to the defects of translation, as our *translated Books*, like our own *Books translated*, generally give you the shadow for the substance, and that a *dark shadow*: the figure, frequently a graceful one, mutilated, dismembered, mangled, and the soul wholly left out. It is not often, indeed, that a man who has any force in himself, any intellectual energies of his own, can be prevailed upon to undertake the comparatively humble office of translation; it gives a man of original talents something like volunteering his own dependence; it is a sublime painter submitting to copy from a foreign artist, instead of employing his pencil in drawing from the rich scenery in his own mind, supplied only by nature and art, under her controul, whether the stores are found in one country or another. The consequence is inevitable. We have either poor imitations of poor originals, whereby nonsense at second hand is exported and imported, backwards and forwards, in a most unprofitable barter! or what is yet worse, the legitimate offspring of genius and wit are forced to cross the ocean, to be stript on their landing of their native ornaments, to be defaced, “curtailed of their fair proportions,” and exposed in that condition a public spectacle! they are then left, like bleeding and much-injured ghosts, to wander unsoothed, unnoticed round an alien shore, or flit indignant back to their native soil,

that France with her gun-boats was going to complete her destruction. The most confident,

But when there is a just measure and due proportion of genius and ability between an original Author and his Translator; when their minds are in a kind of sympathy, and their subject is as dignified as important, they invigorate and add a lustre to each other. One *such* writer finds himself described and portrayed by another without having previously communicated. They were created counterparts. They meet at once as friends, and with a kindred sort of delight diffuse each other through the world. Hence, a Virgil and Homer, have to boast a Dryden and Pope, and in all such instances the original, and the translation travel down the stream of Time together, and by changing a single word, may be compared to

“The sweet breezes of the South,

Receiving and giving odour;

At once indebted and discharg'd.”

MALLET DU PAN and the British public, are to be felicitated on the “*Mercure Britannique*,” having found such a Translator as Mr. DALLAS,* of whose ability, to do justice to his original, though the subsequent passage is no unfavourable specimen, yet a true judgment can be formed only by

* The English public are already indebted to this Gentleman, for giving it a translation of Mr. CIZAY's *Memoirs of the Prison History of the unhappy Royal Family of France while confined and persecuted in the Temple*; and the characteristics of Mr. C.'s publication, simplicity and pathos, in the detail of the abhorrent facts, are faithfully preserved by the *Traducteur*. To the same pen, we likewise owe works of original and independent merit.

allowing her the possibility of an exterior resistance, gave her up to the scourges of an internal revolution: one bewailed the destruction of her commerce, another that of her finances; and when her heroism was admired, the inutility of it was lamented.

“How was I surprised on landing, to find that a war, the most terrible that any Empire was ever exposed to, produces a thousand times less risk, trouble, sadness and fear, than the charms of Peace, in which all the competitors for concord with the French Republic rock themselves and tremble!

“It is with 800 ships of war, 150,000 seamen, 300,000 men under arms, £50,000,000 sterling annually poured by public patriotism, opulence and liberality, into the scale of resources; it is with periodical victories, the brilliancy of which has never yet been equalled in the naval annals of any nation; it is in

an opportunity to peruse the whole, and such opportunity, I propose to give you, by letting the estimable translation accompany, as it ought, the valuable original.

securing all the anchors of the admirable constitution the more, the more the enemy tries to remove them, that England waits without fear and without impatience the issue of her dangers.

“ When we see innumerable fleets bearing the tributes of the whole world to England, and without interruption renewing the national wealth, under the protection of a naval force, before which the French scarcely dare now to venture a few pirates; when we compare those wonders of industry, labour and activity, all the sources of opulence and grandeur maintained and increased, with the obstructions, languor, discouragements and disasters, which have ruined for six years past the commerce and wealth of the most flourishing nations; when from London to the Highlands of Scotland, from the Throne to the Cottage, from the Parliament to the pettiest Borough, in Counting-houses as well as in Palaces, at the obscurest citizen's as at the peer's, we observe a uniform sentiment and zeal, so much knowledge united to so enthusiastic an attachment to the country and its laws, so happy an agreement between

the Government and the Nation, and all ranks and degrees in harmony conspiring to repel the ferocious stranger who menaces their liberty and their happiness, we fall on our knees before Providence, who gives this living lesson to all nations as a watch-tower of help and preservation."

W

When ascending heart I joined in the
 harmless merriment of these humble children of
 nature, and after the cheap dedication—I will
 not call it sacrifice—of a single half hour to
 their festivities, I withdrew, amidst their bless-
 ings, to my chamber, where, having transcribed
 the impressions I had received, I took my walk
 of contemplation in the park, under favour of
 the Harvest moon, in one of the most balmy-
 breathing evenings I have ever known in Eng-
 land. I repeated every object which I had
 visited in the morning; but partly from the
 accession of interest they had gained by the
 various circumstances and reflections that had
 since taken place, and partly from the new and
 more benign aspect they assumed, from the

LETTER XIII.

HOUGHTON.

WITH assenting heart, I joined in the harmless merriment of these humble children of nature, and after the cheap dedication—I will not call it sacrifice—of a single half hour to their festivities, I withdrew, amidst their blessings, to my chamber, where, having transcribed the impressions I had received, I took my walk of contemplation in the park, under favour of the Harvest-moon, in one of the most balmy-breathing evenings I have ever known in England. I repassed every object which I had visited in the morning; but partly from the accession of interest they had gained by the various circumstances and reflections that had since taken place, and partly from the new and more benign aspect they assumed, from the

mild influence of that orb, which softens every thing within reach of her beams, my satisfaction seemed not so much a repetition as an improvement. The gentle night-breeze that whispered amongst the branches—the majestic foliage, whose canopy half admitted and half excluded the moon-ray, which broke into fairy and playful shadows at my feet—the timid steps of the deer, as they tripped before me—the attempered magnificence, yet heightened magic, of the Hall where the illustrious persons who had supplied my heart with so many impressive circumstances, both within and without the mansion, and the lunar survey of that church, in which the ashes of those persons reposed, combined to produce that feeling of the mind which is the most solemn, and, perhaps, the most salutary. To the farthest extent of the scene within sight of the eye, or hearing of the ear, every thing,—for even the zephyr seemed to slumber for a time,—became as still as the silent portraits of the family in the house, or the dust of the originals over which I had paused in the church.

Going up close to one of the Gothic windows I looked into the church, and, aided by the moon, saw the flat marbles under which the Walpoles were buried as distinctly as by day, and in a more awful point of view. Of the Prime Minister and the Poet, what then remained, my dear Baron, that could give them "form and pressure" in the mind of a meditative traveller, but the image of the virtues and talents they were known to possess in their days of nature, and which that mind appreciated? Truly may I answer, the rest "was leather and prunella:" their titles, their wealth, their honours, the loud applauses of the senate, and the softer voice of the Muses were lighter than the dust of their crumbling bones, in the scale of reflection.

Yet a few years, thought I, and the whole of those merry-hearted groupes whom I have just left in a happiness, high, perhaps, as mortals can taste, from the strong and mingled emotions of simplicity, vivid spirits, animated by unusual auxiliaries, and a respite from labour, —yet a few years, and these, with all the myriads

that at this moment wake or sleep on the bosom of the earth, shall, like the tenants of that cold spot, be covered in its bowels. My face was still pressed to the casement, and my eye, intently directed to the part of the aisle which Jarvis had shewn me, could not have gazed more earnestly, had I expected that the tombs would have yielded to me their dead. It is certain I formed no such notion; neither is my imagination sufficiently creative to embody my own thoughts and fears; shaping them into skeletons, or throwing over them the customary winding-sheet of the common people, nor their long crape veil and satin manteau; no, nor the coats of mail, nor any other of the prescriptive drapery of the dramatic poets: though, in this case, it would have been dressing them more in character to have given Horace the Bard's velvet-cap and loosened shirt-collar, and Sir Robert the robes of a Peer of England. Indeed, a very slight dash of superstition, might have helped me to work up as well-accounted a pair of sprites as have lately appeared either in print or on the stage.

As I stood to view the effect of the moonlight on the four lofty cupolas of Houghton, and on the desolated wing of the building which had been destroyed by fire, and was yet black from the flame, the wonders of Otranto passed across my mind, assimilating, in some degree, with the imagery around me; and I should have had as good a *shadow* * of probability in seeming to see the author of that awe-exciting romance, rise before me with a magician's wand in his hand, as any of the literary conjurers, in my country or in yours; and the influence of a Prime Minister of State, being, in the opinion of many, more potent than any *other* magician, there would have been at least as strong reason to support me, had I fancied Sir Robert moving before me in the plenitude of power with more than the enchantments of Prospero.

But I was not wrought up to fancy any of these preternatural visions, yet if such appear-

* Forgive the equivocal on the word *shadow*.

ances had really been permitted, this was, methought, a moment in which my mind would have been best fitted to receive and to welcome them, had they taken any shape in which they could have been recognized. I became interested and even affected, by the varieties of light and shade that the sweet planet over my head had given to the objects; when walking a few paces backward, to survey the exterior of this picturesque little edifice of public worship, somewhat of a hard-breathed sigh aroused my attention: the sudden movement of a light step, several times repeated, increased the alarm. There came over me, a kind of chilling sensation, which, it is probable, even heroes have felt on hearing unexpected sounds after a ghost-story, while alone and in the night; and though the foot-steps were now close behind me, I had not resolution to turn round to see from what or whom they proceeded: I shifted ground a little more to the other side of the church, and the instant I did so, I felt the skirt of my coat forcibly struck; a hurried movement succeeded. This

impelled me to press yet more round to the back of the building, where I remained still and silent, and with a palpitating breast, till I found every thing else so. I was beginning to recede, when the moon shone on two large dark eyes staring full in my face !

Believe me, I shall henceforth the less wonder, at the force of imagination in others, under the influence of certain fears, against which no courage can stand prepared. It was not immediately I could perceive, that over those eyes grew a pair of lofty antlers, the property of one of the Houghton Bucks, and who had got, like myself, by stealth into the church-yard. The long-drawn sigh, heard at first, was but the natural consequence of the poor animal's respiration in a comfortable nap, and the quick motion which followed, merely the natural effect of my own retrograde steps, as they approximated the sod he had chosen for his bed, and being abruptly driven out of it. Thus it is, my friend, that, not only conscience, but FANCY

“—— doth make cowards of us all,
And thus the native hue of Resolution
Is sicklied o'er by the pale cast of FEAR.”

It is probable that were most of the ghostly
terrors which have so long haunted men's ima-
ginations, to be traced from their effects to their
causes, they would be as humanly accounted
for as the apparition of the poor Buck in
Houghton church-yard.

Yet the mind, circumstanced as mine then
was, does not very readily recover its poise.
Both at the cause and effect we smile long be-
fore we have resumed ourselves. The harmless
creature that occasioned my late apprehensions,
seemed to watch the opportunity which my
opening the church-gate afforded him, of escap-
ing from himself and joining the herd. I saw
him run eagerly to some of his companions,
and I have not a doubt but he made them as
well acquainted with the adventure and with
the alarm I had put *him* to, in *his* language,
as I have explained it to you in mine. I will
venture to speak yet more positively as to the
consolation I am *sure* he received from their

Society. I felt that my consolements must be derived from a similar source—I had, indeed, no friends, to whose bosoms I could resort for immediate relief; but, blessed be the medium through which our joys and griefs can be communicated from heart to heart, and receive returns of sympathy, though separated by distant shores, and though vast gulphs roll between them!—I could hasten to my “local habitation” at the King’s-head, and relieve myself, as I have now done, by addressing the

Baron de B*****

LETTER XIV.

HOUGHTON,

IT will interest you to read whatever can be collected to the posthumous honour of a nobleman whose life was distinguished by so many works of practical benevolence. I will not, therefore, deny either you or myself the pleasure of communicating a liberal and judicious review of his general character, from a gentleman who was well acquainted with the valuable qualities that formed it.

Such an example of active patronage in the agriculture of an extensive county, added to so much unvaunted private bounty, cannot be too widely diffused, nor too closely emulated. It is, indeed, of more importance to society, and goes nearer to the heart than all the catalogues and criticisms of pictures and paintings, whether modern or antique, from the

imperial palace where the pictorial treasures of Houghton Hall are now transferred, to the dismantled gallery of Dusseldorf, thence to dismantled Italy, onward to their present revolutionary depositories in Paris. Such a cultivator of his native land, and such a protector of the useful peasantry that render it productive, under his encouraging auspices, gives to the part of the earth intrusted to his care, a new face, to nature a richer form, and teaches wealth and industry their wisest lesson.

The public papers that have announced the death of Lord Orford have recorded the ancestry from which he was descended, the heirs of his honours, and the inheritors of his wealth, and have dwelt upon the titles that are extinct or devolved, together with all the posts and employments that are vacant. To me be the melancholy duty, says the author* of this tribute, of noting what is of much more moment than the descent of peerage, or the

* Arthur Young, Esq.

transfer of an estate—the loss of an animated improver; of one who gave importance to cultivation by a thorough knowledge of political œconomy; and who bent all his endeavours towards making mankind happy, by seconding the pursuits of the farmer, and the inquiries of the experimentalist: I leave the lieutenancy of a county, the rangership of a park, and the honours of the bedchamber, to those in whose eyes such baubles are respectable, I would rather dwell on the merit of the first importer of South-down sheep into Norfolk; on the merit of sending to the most distant regions for breeds of animals represented as useful, not, indeed, always with success, but never without liberality in the motive; on the patron and friend of the common farmer, not the lord of a little circle of tenants, but the general and diffusive encourager of every species of agricultural improvement, nor did he associate with useful men because he was not qualified for the company of higher classes, for his mind was fraught with a great extent of knowledge; it was decorated by no trivial stores of classical

learning, which carried and set off the powers of a brilliant imagination, and thus qualified alike for a court, or an academy of science, he felt no degradation in attending to the plough.

There were, it is said, strong peculiarities, and some shades in this estimable character: but they have so little to do, with the real and general good to be educed from the parts above stated, that you will excuse my officiously gathering them up to send them into Germany, or extend their circulation in England. Much less shall I allow myself to dwell on the circumstances which clouded several years of his valuable life, and which grew, alas! more and more dark till they brought on the gloomy catastrophe of his death. Be it sufficient to say, that in that event, the British farmer was deprived of a wise instructor, the labourer of a generous friend, the county of Norfolk of a protector, and England of a real patriot, without any of the obtrusive claims, and noisy pretences to patriotism—a word as little understood, and as much abused, perhaps, in all countries, as any in language.

To the above meritorious nobleman, it has been already observed to you that our celebrated Horace Walpole, the youngest son of Sir Robert, and uncle to Lord George, succeeded. It has been said very truly, that his Royal and Noble Authors, and Historic Doubts, sufficiently prove his excellence as an English antiquary, and how much the most dull and dry subjects in the hands of a man of genius, may be rendered interesting and amusing. His lighter works are all marked by an easy elegance of style, a playfulness of imagination, and a delicacy of wit, of which kind of writing* he first set the example in England, as Voltaire some years before had done in France. His Lordship

* I will not add to the volumes written on the charges brought against his Lordship, respecting his conduct to

“ The boy whom once patrician pens adorned,

“ First meanly flatter'd, then as meanly scorn'd;”
because too much has already been said on that subject: and, perhaps, too little proved, either in accusation or defence. But the lovers of true genius will never cease to deplore the untimely loss of Chatterton.

dying in the 80th year of his age, March 2, 1797, the earl Cholmondeley came into possession of the Houghton estate, the 20th of the same month, and it could not have devolved into more worthy hands.

Houghton village consists of a single street of neat brick buildings, uniform both within and without: it was erected by Sir Robert for his own appropriate little tenantry and poor. From forty to fifty families of this description have here comfortable homes, with various indulgent privileges attached, and for which, that it may not altogether have the air of a bounty, they are rated for room-rent, at an annual guinea, which has, for a time long past, been received in full by a yearly shilling; a mode of payment continued by the present noble proprietor of the town. I have conversed with several of the inhabitants, sat down in their cottages, heard their tales of satisfaction, and seeing them all happy, am myself the happier. It has, indeed, been a sincere joy to me this morning, to observe not only those who had gaily yielded to the brief respite of their toils last night, but a

numerous band of others, young and old, the garrulous Jarvis at their head, each crowned with a sickle, going with willing hearts, and therefore more able hands, to begin that harvest, which a few hours ago I had heard them so gleefully anticipate. I saw them gather into jovial rings the length of their street, three deep, the centre formed by the men, the top part by the women, and that nearest the road by the park paling,—which is their boundary,—gave space for the children. Three merry and heart-sent huzzas were given, and then, quitting hands, they all started together for the field, as if they were rushing to their pastime.

Happy, harmless beings ! we commiserate, my friend, those whom we should gratulate, and measure the sum of felicity, not by the healthful labour of others, but by our own dispiriting indolence. I was up with the sun to witness this preparation for hard work. The face of that sun, though he had risen in splendour, looked not more joyous than did the blithe and rosy countenances he shone upon. To a man of your unsophisticated feeling—to any man who has

a heart, and loves his kind—it was a sight worth a journey from your German Chateau, to the spot in England where scarce two hours ago it delighted your friend.

In what spirits did it not send me back to my little inn! and what a zest has it given to my pleasant breakfast; which, instead of taking alone in the room where I had at first ordered it, mixed me with mine hostess and her family in her own parlour. A scene of sadness would have sent me pining into the solitude of my chamber, for I derive little solace from making others as wretched as myself, when the division of pain is the only good to be expected from its communication. But in joy!—in the fulness of *happy* feelings, not to seek, and even throw oneself in the way of any human creature that has enough of heart to share it, unites folly to avarice. It hoards the treasure which would accumulate by circulation.

And mine hostess *has* a heart, and her fair daughter another. I described what I had heard and seen; a tale of glee and good humour seldom wants a well-natured hearer, and all was

as it should be. I had ordered my horse, when I found, all at once, that mine hostess was a poet; Whilom she had sung, a famous coursing match, in Houghton-park :

“ When *Catch* was deem'd the swiftest dog that run,
“ By whom, of course, the ladle then was won.”

And those were two of her verses, which, for aught I know, merit the prize as well as the greyhounds. Yea, and her Muse had mourned, if not amid the inspirings of poesy, in the simplicity of truth, which is better, the death of Lord George :

“ When his just soul on heavenly gales had flown
“ To regions where no human ills are known,
“ Where ev'ry scene does endless pleasures prove,
“ And all is rapture, harmony and love.”

Moreover a song of her own composing was amongst the joyous tributes of yesterday's conviviality, and the poet-hostess herself has furnished me with a stanza, by which you may judge of the rest :

"Come, let us all agree,
And join most cheerfully,
This day to pass;
In honour of our new Peer,
May we thus every year
Push round the glass."

No bad wish, you will say, for an inn-keeper : but I am satisfied the author had no more idea of self-love, or self-interest while she wrote, than had the merry mortals who sung and resung her strain. Whoever could enter into the sentiment, I will be sworn would have been welcome to the most exhilarating accompaniments of her cellar. And as for criticism upon the poetry, the Cynic whose brow could have wrinkled at the humble efforts of a self-taught, happy being, in the momentary overflowings of her gratitude, ought never to smile again, or have *cause* to smile.

LETTER XV.

ROAD SIDE, *between*
HOUGHTON and FAKENHAM.

AFTER you have passed the boundary of Houghton plantations, you will meet nothing to win attention from reflections on the past, till you reach FAKENHAM; if, peradventure, you do not immediately direct your steps to HOLKHAM: unless, indeed, you should be induced to pass a few minutes at the outskirts of the village of East Rudham, and there converse with my poor ANTHONY FLOWER, the old man of the gate.

Thirty and seven years has this veteran sat, as he told me, in the capacity of clerk under the minister, and, every Sabbath-day sits under him still; "because the minister, Sir," says he, "will not part with me, and because we have

gotten into years together." (I am using Anthony's words,) "God be bless'd! I can say Amen still, and, except now and then, in the right places; and when I don't so cleverly hit it off, as I us'd to do, master gives me a *nudge*, and I am almost sure to have it next time."

He told me, moreover, that the minister has a fine voice, and always marks the closing words of a prayer with more force, to serve as a cue to the clerk. Anthony has kept a gate, which you will find at the end of the town, upwards of seven years; in Winter he pulls it open to the passengers from a mossed hut, which seems a part of himself; in summer, from the bank, where the sods are formed into a pleasant seat, and where he can feel that cordial of age, the nourishment of the sun. He was born in the year eleven; and though now demi-deaf, and more than demi-blind—for he is almost in total darkness—he contrives to carry on his double duties as usual: "Yes—thank God—old master still likes to have me *pottering* about him, Sir," said Anthony, "and, I fancy, he would miss me of a Sabbath, if he

did not see me, as much as all of the parish would his discourse—for he's a fine discourser, and practises as well. Ay, and I should miss him as much if I did not hear him; and I have often said, if any body else should sit under him, and take away my Amen while I can call it, it would go hard with me. I am a poor man, to be sure, Sir, but I had rather throw myself wholly on my gate-gettings, than lose my seat under my minister, though I should not get a farthing for doing it."

But is it not difficult for you to get either to your gate or your pew, Anthony? questioned I.

"No;" he answered, "not so much as I might think. 'Tis true, he was getting feebler and feebler every day, and he could not do a *sort* himself: but his town-folk were very good natur'd to him, because he never did harm to any of them, but now and then, times are gone, a good turn: his little grand-daughter, every night at sun-set, led him from his gate to the village: his wife, though, to be sure, be-crippled, always made shift, hitherto, to ring his Sabbath, and his burial bells—

to chime in and to chime out—his little grand-daughter would shoot up soon, and be able to do more for him in a year or two—if it should please God to let him live so long—but as he did not like to take up her time now, as he lov'd her, and paid for her schooling, he gave her every twelfth halfpenny he got at his gate; and as she was a very good, pretty-like-looking girl, he wished to give her some learning; so got one neighbour or another, as he went to work, to help him to his gate. “I was always up betimes, Sir,” added Anthony, “and in my young years as stirring as any of them. Why, for a sort of years I was a carrier, and walked twice a week by the side of my cart—for I was almost too proud, with such a pair of legs under me, to ride—from Lynn, Rudham, and other places, to Norwich, and back again as well, and as to wrestling, single-sticking, and such like, few could match ANTHONY FLOWER.”

The remains of this man moved at once my pity and my reverence: the frame which is now bowed with, literally, the *weight* of years, must

once have measured to the proudest standard of what we call the hero—a chosen figure for the field of battle—and his limbs, though visibly shrunk by decay, could still boast a less emaciated sign of the fair proportions of manhood, than the attenuated, thread-like, shadowy forms of some of our dissipated youth—they were limbs that measured to the standard of something *more* than the *mere* hero; they composed a figure for the field of peace; yet, as the sword has, in every age of the world, been, alas! as necessary as the plough, and as the one has been frequently drawn to protect the other, it behoves us to do honour to both, by entwining the garland of industry with that of glory, the corn-sheaf with the laurel;—O, my friend! that we could, in this terrible crisis, mingle the olive in our wreath.

“ Pure source of every joy! mild concord bring,
Each healing blessing on thy snowy wing:
Teach the wild storm of ruthless war to cease,
And charm the nations to the reign of peace.”

O, may the wish and prayer of the Poet* be soon granted!

But I dare not, at present, trust myself with a subject that to the eye of Pity discolours every scene of the sun that has been shining on my quiet path, and cheering every unmolested object within my view, from the poor gateman on his bank, to the small bird that I now hear whistling near his shed.

Blessed sun! and blessed country! where freedom still adds lustre to his beams! In the wide travel of his orb, around this his zone of attempered radiance—where else, even on this beauteous day, can its inhabitants promise to themselves either the herb which he expands, the fruit which he matures, or the varied seed which multiplies itself in the abundant earth?

The question has the energy of a self-evident proposition, and includes its answer.

* Henry James Pye, Esq. in his poem of Naucratria: a work equally poetical and patriotic.

And this, Baron, is amongst the prime beatitudes of our land. In almost every other, the establishments of society, the arrangement of nations, and the harmonies of nature are either broken or destroyed. Even in yours, my friend, they are endangered. The Baltic and the Rhine, which partially lave your shores only partially defend them: and you feel already the difference between a Continent, vast and almost immeasurable, without a navy, and a small insulated speck, girded by the ocean which it commands, and guarded by the impregnable castles that repel the billow and the foe. The visitations which have been inflicted, on the territory of your Emperor, in the circle of Burgundy and the Belgic provinces, and the contributions since the unstable peace, in districts bordering on the Lhan, without counting the spoliations on electorates, palatinates, and other principalities, have already desolated their beauty, and drained the internal treasure of an enormous sum; and that only in two campaigns, and a third is begun. In the mean time, our palace and our hut, our bounteous fields and

beauteous gardens remain to us. "In Britain, thank God!" says an animated writer, "the throne stands above the cottage to protect it; but its basis is too sound to fall upon and crush it." It looks down benignly upon it—it smiles even upon my poor gate-man's shed, my friend, like a tutelary guardian from above.

A very short residence amongst us will carry the conviction of these awful truths from your eye to your heart. You are coming to us with improved faculties; with the partial endowments of nature highly cultivated—and with an expanded soul—with feelings too, which an intimate acquaintance with man, in different climes, and under different governments, have instructed and enlarged. The wisdom thus collected, will prepare you for an early, unprejudiced, and honest confession, and for a full enjoyment of what would, indeed, inspire in the breast of every foreigner a sentiment of admiration; though in some bosoms, it would be mixed with envy; yet, what is envy but admiration in despair? In your manly bosom, the emotion will be as generous as honourable.

A survey of England, were you *now* its visitant—and could that survey of it be taken, even at this perturbed crisis ;—its still uninjured scenery, its life-sustaining surface, its prospering agriculture, its protected arts, its guarded commerce, and its unviolated property—however hard certain levies on it, in this dread season of uncommon exigence, and of expedient, may seem to bear on those UNTRAVELLED natives, who, happily for them, have not had,—and O, my lov'd countrymen, may ye never have !—the various opportunities which you, and I, my friend, and thousands more have but too often possessed, of comparing *themselves with others*—of being eye-witnesses how much *more* tranquil, *more* rich, *more* happy, and *more* secure in rights, in morals, in freedom ; in their treasure, their progeny, and their religion—in all that the ALMIGHTY gives, and that man receives—however, I say, the *reverse* of these simple yet solemn facts, may, by temporary pressures, or seductive arguments, be imposed on some of those who daily possess, though they do not enjoy, the blessings of England, you

will soon be satisfied, that neither in this, nor in any former sketch, however warmly coloured, have I indulged in the language of enthusiasm or nationality. Yes, were you this moment—and O that you were!—the companion of my way, even at this casual resting-place on the public road—could your liberal eye survey with mine the serenity, the plenty, the exuberance around—could your ear, like mine, receive the unbroken carol of the woods, the villages, the fields, and listen to the undisturbed minstrelsy of gleeful labour, of affection, and of joy, on this fair day, which in so many other parts of the earth dawn'd, and alas! must close, in blood, you would feel, not only what it is to be a Briton, but to be under the shadow of Britannia's wing, even in the worst of times!

“We have every thing yet to lose,” says a powerful writer, “we have under our own form of government, comfort, protection, honour, security, and happiness. The price of preserving them is, indeed, great, very great; but the price of anarchy, of unqualified reform, and inextricable confusion, would be greater beyond

all calculation. We have still many and great resources ; but the times never called with so loud, and so commanding a voice, for wisdom, discernment and integrity, for temperate, timely, and gradual concession, with dignity and security, and for an œconomy rigid and undeviating, on the parts of our governors. The times call equally for obedience, systematic acquiescence under temporary pressure, alacrity in defence, and vigilance, and loyalty, and steadiness in all the subjects of this land. We have no need of the Roman Armilustrum ; our arms are purified already. Our soldiers are loyal and honourable, and without spot. They have been weighed in the balance, and found perfect. And I trust, our naval flag will never again wave but in defiance to our enemies."

The flame of this manly and impassioned Author kindles into a kind of glory, as he proceeds—" I see" continues he, " the ancient marks of our country in every loyal countenance. I would give life to every one who thinks, and who loves our great kingdom and its constitution. In times of national distress

Poets have sometimes found means to invigorate the public mind, and to confirm its stability. I speak, indeed, of the days of old, 'the image of our antique world.' But now, when the temple and the citadel, the worship, and the strength, and the constitution of our forefathers are to be venerated and defended; it is happy that we can trace and find these powers, each in their order. We may be reminded of all that was depicted in the fabled palace, where the deities once assembled in full consistory:

*Signa tamen, divumque tori, et quem quisque
sacrat*

Accubitu genioque, locus monstrantur.

"But I fable not. We have not the images, but the very things before us; and the words of poetry are set off by the superior force of truth."

I will offer nothing after this very masterly display of oratory in support of truth, but leave it on your heart with the glow it must have produced. Let us not degrade such writers, whatever cause they espouse, by calling them

Partizans. They are Philanthropists. They are, indeed, amongst the noblest works of God; they are honest men.

Yet, eloquence, philanthropy, genius and honesty may be associated in the same head and heart. The assemblage is rare in any nation; but to the honour of ours you will join the following Verses, on the character of the *true* POET, to the sentiments of the PATRIOT—by which word I understand a *real* Lover of his Country—and acknowledge, that we have a right, in this instance, to be proud of their Union:

“ The favour'd BARD,
Who nobly conscious of his just reward,
With loftier soul, and undecaying might
Paints what he feels in characters of light.
He turns: and instantaneous all around
Cliffs whiten, waters murmur, voices sound;
Portentous forms in heav'n's aerial hall
Appear, as at some great supernal call:
Thence, oft in thought, his steps ideal haste
To rocks and groves, the wilderness or waste;
To plains, where Tadmor's regal ruins lie
In desolation's sullen majesty:

Or where Carthusian tow'rs the pilgrim draw,
And bow the soul with unresisted awe :
Whence Bruno, from the mountain's pine-clad brow
Survey'd the world's inglorious toil below ;
Then, as down ragged cliffs the torrent roar'd,
Prostrate great Nature's present God ador'd,
And bade, in solitude's extremest bourn,
Religion hallow the severe sojourn.

“ To Him the Pow'rs of harmony resort.
And as the Bard, with high-commanding port,
Scans all th' ethereal wilderness around,
Pour on his ear the thrilling stream of sound ;
Strains, from the full-strung chords at distance swell,
Notes, breathing soft from musick's inmost cell ;
While to their numerous pause ; or accent deep,
His choral passions dread accordance keep.

“ Thence musing, lo ! he bends his weary eyes
On life and all its sad realities ;
Marks how the prospect darkens in the rear,
Shade blends with shade, and fear succeeds to fear,
Mid forms that rise, and flutter through the gloom,
Till death unbar the cold sepulch'ral room.

“ Such is the Poet : such his claim divine !—
Imagination's charter'd libertine,

He scorns, in apathy, to float or dream,
On listless satisfaction's torpid stream;
But dares alone in vent'rous bark to ride
Down turbulent Delight's tempestuous tide.
With thoughts encount'ring thoughts in conflict strong,
The deep Pierian thunder of the song,
Rolls o'er his raptur'd sense: the realms on high
For him disclose their varied majesty;
He feels the call: then bold, beyond controul,
Stamps on the immortal page, the visions of his soul."

Such, my dear Baron, is *this* Poet, Patriot,
and Philanthropist!—A man who can thus
feel, and thus express his feelings, illustrat-
ing his theory by his practice, a teacher of
the most sublime art, and amongst the very
best illustrations of what is to be taught; one
who has proved himself able, alike to point the
keen yet polished shaft of satire, and to sweep
the lyre, is privileged, even on Mr. Pope's
axiom,* to censure or to praise. My own pub-
lic efforts have slightly, or not at all, come

* "Let those judge others who themselves excel."

under his notice, either in the way of eulogy or blame; I, therefore, feel myself the more free to pour forth my sentiments of his high capacities, without suspicion of a motive less disinterested, than the pure enthusiasm which true genius should inspire: and I dare to hope,—though heaven knows we are all feeble beings—had such a Writer been my foe—it being scarcely possible he should be an *ungenerous* one—I should thus have yielded to the *general* delight which conviction of *general* excellence, would have excited in my heart.

Not that I conceive he has always been right in his judgments: and for that reason I lay some stress on the repetitions of the word *general*. No doubt, he has sometimes, like other men, followed prejudices, and partialities. Methinks it might be shewn that he has. In some cases, perhaps, his affections, and in others his informations, may have misled him;—but, “take him for all in all,”—in the varied combinations that unite the accurate Critick, the man of sound sense, the rational Politician, and legitimate Poet, it is a long time

since we have seen the like of the Author of the "Pursuits of Literature," in our World of Letters: although we have at all times been, as we are now, infested by a mongrel tribe, usurping, by turns, all those august characters,—in the way that a monkey may be said to resemble a man.

Yes, in sad truth, my illumined friend, a race we have, as noxious as numerous; a sorry sort of vermin which not only eject the venom they engender in their own heads and hearts; but, by a baneful kind of process, extract fresh supplies from the sweetest flowers of poesy, and from every precious intellectual substance they literally *feed* upon and disgorge.

These are amongst the vermin that one of the most brilliant writers England ever had to boast, observes, "find poison every where, take a delight in collecting it, and then diffusing it abroad."* Thousands of them are *spawned*

* A passage from one of Mr. Sheridan's speeches in parliament. If you will allow me to apply the description of an ima-

annually even in that palladium, the BRITISH PRESS, whence have issued so many fair crea-

ginary to a real person, I shall desire you to consider the following sentence, as equally characteristic of the fancied hero* for whom it was written, and MR. SHERIDAN. "He has the happy art of rendering every thing interesting; whatsoever he touches, though dull and drossy in itself, acquires, by the alchymy of his genius, a shining, and even sterling quality: sometimes discovering ideas, light, easy, and full of fire, and sometimes anticipating sentiments more weighty and profound.

My estimate of his poetical and *dramatic* genius you already know.† Of his senatorial talents, those who differ from him in political opinion, will be unanimous in their admiration of his wit, the glow of his eloquence, the play of his fancy, and the richness of his mind.

With perfect adherence to truth, and, considering the avowed opposition of their public tenets, with the most perfect reverence of Genius, the author of its "Pursuits" has conveyed, in one of his text-illuminating notes, as *graceful* a compliment to Mr. Sheridan as he has, perhaps, ever received. "I am sorry to say, that in the realms of wit and humour Mr. S. is now silent. Why is he so? politics are transitory, wit is eternal." Yet the ingenious writer whom I quote must remember that wit is also universal, and enters into all subjects: and he will certainly admit that it forms a prominent feature in the political portrait of Mr. S.

* HENRY FITZGORTON, in "*Family Secrets*."

† *Sketch of the Modern Theatre*, in the Introduction to *Gleanings in Wales, &c.*

tions: but the Rose, you know, nourishes the canker. These pests are more thick than the

A pause, however, in his attendance as a statesman, has, happily, for the public amusement, been recently, and very successfully filled by adapting to our theatre, *The Death of Rolla*, from your own KOTZEBUE. The German literature, now, and in many, but *not in all*, respects, is deservedly a fashionable intellectual importation; of which, when opportunity allows, I will communicate with you more particularly. Meantime, which is not often the case, if you or KOTZEBUE himself should be in England while the *anglicised* PIZARRO is in its *run*, as we call it, you would both confess that the laurel of the original should be shared with him who has given it in several parts a brighter hue by transplantation. Indeed, from the report which I have heard of the German bard's modesty, ever a mark of true genius, I am persuaded he would himself be the first to divide the wreath with the British one. Nor is Mr. SHERIDAN alone entitled to a liberal feeling from the affecting KOTZEBUE. An English woman has just claim on him: and the fame he has acquired at home, is not a little expanded abroad, and especially in England, by the medium of Miss PLUMTREE's elegant and interesting translations.

But of the living writers of my country, of both sexes, and of whom it has reason to be proud—an assertion, which, I trust, I shall support by accumulated proofs—a day may come, when, unwarpd by false criticism, either of censure or applause, I may be able to give you a just estimate of the present intellectual character of the land, as it is formed by its late or existing authors. What has hitherto been said on this great national subject,—certainly one of the

toads at the bottom of our ditches, as dirty too, as loathsome and as empoisoned. Yet, behold the justice of Heaven! while, for inscrutable reasons, they are permitted to operate as a literary plague, in every unclean form of Life-makers, Historians, Memoir-men, Pamphleteers, and Paragraphists, amidst all the intellectual property and plenty of the land—a land flowing with the milk and honey of true genius—our literary Canaan—they usually die of famine; not unfrequently, indeed, destroyed by an excess of their own gall. Alas! you are no stranger to them on the Continent. Even the profound Lavater and the interesting Zimmerman, have had their share. How many hundred of the miscreant animalcula have viprously crept into the wreathes of our British Bards, banquetted on the beauties of which they were formed, but died like the bloated fly amidst the sweets?

most important that appertains to any empire,—you will consider but as passing tributes to particular authors as the topic of the moment makes it necessary for me to anticipate, a part of what I have long had in reserve.

And, is it not exulting, to see how that which is immortal, triumphs over that which is corrupt? The spoiler perishes, the wreath remains; the one is swept like the atom away, and of the other not a laurel leaf shall ultimately be injured.

Delightful ZIMMERMAN! tender, empassioned Soliloquist, endearing Sage, virtuous man! How often do thy just and generous reflections, animate, or soothe me! how often does thy high and ennobling sense of Genius, and thy proud scorn of its daring yet impotent foes warm my assenting heart! more especially, when I observe little minds, "drest in a petty, brief authority," wreaking their malice upon great ones.

You, Baron, have the happiness to enrol ZIMMERMAN amongst your friends: his virtues, and the sentiments which describe them, are familiar to you. I cannot have a doubt but the subsequent passage, so apposite to what has been just said, is amongst the treasures of your memory.

"The invectives of the vulgar and the in-

dignation of the critics, are wreak'd in vain against celebrated names, and against all those who liberally imitate them. Why, say each of them to the laughing blockhead, would *you* expound the meaning of all that I write, since my finest strokes, congealing in your mind, produce only such frigid ideas? *Who are you?* by what title do you claim to be keeper of the archives of folly, and arbiter of the public taste? Where are the works by which you are distinguished? When, and where, have you been announCED to the world? how many superior characters do you reckon among the number of your friends? What distant country is conscious that *such a man exists?* Why do you continually preach your *nil admirari?* Why do you strive to depreciate every thing that is good, great and sublime, unless it be from a sense of your own littleness and poverty? You seek the approbation of the weak and giddy multitude, because no one else esteems you: and despise a fair and lasting fame, because you can do nothing that is worthy of honest praise; but, THE NAME'S YOU ENDEA-

YOUR TO RIDICULE SHALL BE REMEMBERED
WHEN YOUR'S WILL BE FORGOTTEN !"

Letters of gold would be too poor for the sentence that closes this animated apostrophe. But it is presented to a rich mind, which knows how to feel and to enshrine it.

LETTER XVI.

FAKENHAM, *August 23, 1798.*

THE remarks which ended the last Letter, have kept my mind in the same train of thought during the remainder of my ride, even from the flowery and fruitful spot where I began them; and before I give you any account of this place, you will feel nothing loath, I trust, in permitting me to go somewhat farther into the subject.

The CRITICISM of English Literature, can only be of less importance than the LITERATURE itself; or, will it not be more correct to say, it forms a part of that Literature! The subject, it is true, has been often discussed as a SCIENCE in a very masterly manner. It has been part even of our school learning, and we

have all been taught to reverence the art which directs the human understanding how best to form its judgment, and to exercise the powers which principally distinguish the mind of man.

From the fountain heads, from Athens, Greece and Rome, sources the most rich and pure, flowing in full streams from the Tiber to the Thames, we have derived at once the theory and practice of this great and noble art—an art, which once had, and guardedly speaking, has still for its characteristic, that which, one of our English Bishops has given to what real wisdom and judgment, will ever consider as the most arduous, because the least agreeable part of the critical office. “Satire,” says this good old pillar of our church,* should be,

— “like the Porcupine

That shoots sharp quills out in each angry line,
And wounds the fiery cheek, and blushing eye,
Of him that WRITES OR READETH guiltily.”

* JOSEPH HALL, one of the Bishops of Norwich, in this county, who read the rhetoric Lectures in the Public Schools of Cambridge, for two years; and distinguished himself as

But we live in days of revolution; many of the old English terms, such as Patriot, Poet,

Wit and a Poet in a very early period of his life, by the publication of his Satires.

The ingenious and very useful compiler of the "Norfolk Tour," has preserved many traits of the virtuous life, and literary character of this Prelate, and also of his honours abroad, and the persecutions he suffered at home: of which latter the following is so notable an instance, that you will be well pleased with my anticipation of it:

Having refused in 1624 the Bishoprick of Gloucester, he accepted in 1627 that of Exeter, and in 1641 was translated to the See of Norwich; but on December 30 following, having joined with other Bishops in the protestation against the validity of the laws made during their forced absence from the parliament, he amongst the rest was committed to the tower on the 30th of January 1642, but was released in June following, upon giving 5000*l.* bail, and withdrew to Norwich; where he lived in tolerable quiet till April 1643. But then the order for sequestering *notorious delinquents* being passed, in which he was included by name, all his estates real and personal were seized and sold at public sale, even (says Blomefield) to a dozen of Trenchers! nor did they forget to lay their hands upon his Ecclesiastical preferments, and turn him out of his palace.

This eminent Divine it seems, was called by Learned Foreigners, the English SENECA.

In the beginning of his Satires he claims the honour of having led the way in this species of composition:

Critic, Orator, are not yet explained, according to their new interpretations, though we have

“ I first adventure, follow me who list,
And be the second English Satyrist.”

This assertion of the Poet is not strictly true ; for there were various satirical writings previously to his appearance. But he was the first who distinguished himself as a legitimate Satyrist, upon the classic model of Juvenal and Persius, with an intermixture of some strokes in the manner of Horace. Succeeding authors have availed themselves of the pattern set them by Hall. The first three books were termed by the author *toothless* satires. He has an animated idea of the dignity of good poetry, and a just contempt of poetasters in the different species of it. He says of himself, in the first Satire :

“ Nor can I crouch, and writhe my fawning taylor
To some great patron for my best avayle,
Such hunger-starven trencher-poetrie,
Or let it never live, or timely die.”

His first book, consisting of nine Satires, is chiefly levelled at low and abject Poets. Several Satires of the second book reprehend the contempt of the rich, for men of science and genius. I shall transcribe the sixth, being short, and void of all obscurity, and illustrative of some English manners two centuries ago.

“ A gentle squire would gladly entertaine
Into his house some trencher-chaplain :
Some willing man that might instruct his sons,
And that would stand to good conditions.

plenty of new dictionary men, with our great lexicographer at their head—and though the

First, that he lye upon the truckle-bed,
 Whiles his young maister lieth o'er his head.
 Second, that he do, on no default,
 Ever presume to sit above the salt.
 Third, that he never change his trencher twice.
 Fourth, that he use all common courtesies;
 Sit bare at meales, and one half rise and wait.
 Last, that he never his young maister beat,
 But he must ask his mother to define
 How many jerks she would his breech should line.
 All these observed, he could contented bee,
 To give *five marks*, and winter *liverie*!"

From this Satire it is evident how humiliating the terms were to which a private tutor was obliged to submit, without much probability of emancipation by the salary of 3l. 6s. 8d. and a great coat.

O the comparative difference, my friend, in this respect, between the olden times, and these *our* days! the trencher-chaplain is now thought a fit companion for the splendid table of his gentle squire—the truckle-bed is converted to a bed of state—the trencher itself into a plate of silver, changed at every dish! Instead of waiting half the time, in a winter livery, he has a score of well-powder'd, well-perfum'd, well-nosegay'd, and well-lac'd footmen at his command: some of whom, indeed, are appendages of too superb a kind, to wear any livery at all—the *Gentlemen of the Gentlemen*, so please you, and, have several little Gentlemen of their

word *aster* has been joined to each of the above names, as patriotaster, criticaster, &c. much

own to wait upon *them*, before they can be properly *prepared* to wait upon the *great* Gentleman; who, in turn, has, peradventure, a *greater* Gentleman than himself to wait upon; and even that greater Gentleman is in waiting to some greater yet, till the scale of "*courtesie*"—we will not call it *servitude*, shall we?—mounts up to the greatest Gentleman of all! and he, alas! is obliged, in purchase of all this waiting, to wait upon every body.

And with respect to *tutorage*, instead of a 3l. 6s. and 8-penny salary—even as money was, at the time the learned Bishop wrote his Satires, two centuries ago (in 1597)—and a great coat—if, peradventure, which is not unfrequently the case, the "*trencher-chaplain*" of these times, is chosen to be the trencher-chaplain *abroad*, in consequence of having "*stood to good conditions at home*, or to speak in language more modern, if he is advanced from private instructor, to the dignity of *Travelling Tutor*, the five Marks multiply by hundreds, and after having made, with the companion of his hopes, in the traverse of different climes, all that fashion, fortune, or nature would *allow*, to be made of him, when, in short, he returns his charge to the arms of his friends, and to the bosom of his country, either a finished English gentleman, or a finished English blockhead, or a sort of mediocre character between both, the *Tutorship* glides comfortably into *Annuityship*, and a snug three hundred pounds a-year for life, with a life interest also in the family table rewards the Sage!—300l. a-year! why, 'tis the price of almost the income of a petty Princi-

might yet be done. You know enough of our language to see how easily I might *pun* upon these two adjunct syllables, and with the help only, of what you foreigners call the *hisser* in our throats, (the *s*) as critic-*ass*-ter, dividing one from the other by a slight hyphen, you feel that the appellation would lose none of its force. In solemn discussions, however, we hold punning, on this side the German ocean, to be inadmissible.

Know then, my friend, that amongst our innovations, we have literary statutes at large, and codes of criticism in abstract, with which the noble art, just mentioned, has no more to do, than with Breslaw's art of Trickery. Those

pality in some other countries, with all its wisdom to boot.—“O the rare days of good Queen Bess!” our learned *Clerkes*, have been wont to exclaim—“O the finer days of good King George!” say I, when a youth can give an estate for the *finishing* part of his education, which too often teaches him nothing more than the easiest way of doing nothing agreeably—the getting rid of himself! but we have many splendid exceptions—of whom in order.

codes and statutes, indeed, much more resemble the mighty magic of the miracle-worker last named, than any of the regular bred practitioners of old, or of modern times. Circumscribed mortals! *they* could only work by rule and measure, the rule of reason, and the measure of right: but the critical Breslaws of Great Britain, might make Longinus, and all other book legislators blush, to think they had exhausted so many years in studying a *science* which their successors have proved, requires no study, nor any science at all. Why, Sir, we have biographers, who know only, that the subjects of their memoirs, were born within the century, and if not still alive, must certainly be dead; but who, with these slight materials, can story us from the swathing cloaths to the shroud; can catalogue the minutiae of soul and body, vices and virtues, weigh to the fraction of a scruple, even to the weight of a split hair, or thistle-down thrice divided, the natural stock of sense and nonsense, ascertaining each man's share—in short, chartists, who draw maps of our morality, with our black sea, and our red

sea, our depths and our shallows, our Scylla and our Charybdis, and all coloured and discoloured, and lined and interlined, curved and straightened, even like the map of the world itself.*

Yea, and we have critics, who on the like principles, and the like stock of ingenuity and information, deal wholesale and retail in the trade of lampoonery, or panegyric; but, by a singular inversion of common rules, it is a species of fame for an author, or for his book to

* Talking of the great difficulty of obtaining authentic information for biography, Johnson said, "When I was a young fellow I wanted to write the 'Life of Dryden,' and in order to get materials, I applied to the only two persons then alive who had seen him; these were old Swinney and old Cibber. Swinney's information was no more than this, 'That at Will's coffee-house Dryden had a particular chair for himself, which was set by the fire in winter, and was then called his winter-chair; and that it was carried out for him to the balcony in summer, and was then called his summer-chair.' Cibber could tell no more but 'That he remembered him a decent old man, arbiter of critical disputes at Will's.' You are to consider that Cibber was then at a great distance from Dryden; had perhaps one leg only in the room, and durst not draw in the other."

become the subject of the former, and a kind of disgrace to find himself, or his composition, the *burden* of the latter.

—Peaceful plunder to all such.—You know the remark of Pope.* A poetical axiom that has expanded itself through every country, and has a place in every memory. Its truth, indeed, will travel down to all ages, and continue unimpaired till the earth shall be freed of noxious reptiles. But as the animalcula of the mind, like those of the air and earth, are, doubtless, among the evils entailed upon us by the Fall, and will probably, more or less, annoy us till our eternal Rise, they have, I perceive, derived a consequence to which they are not entitled, even while I have been describing their filthy nature.

I have to discourse with your enlightened mind, my friend, on a matter of more weight, as to the office of literary criticism.

* "Destroy his web, and sophistry? in vain
The creature's at his dirty work again."

There cannot be a doubt but that while the liberty of the press, as to the freedom of publication, shall be sacred—and on this side of licentiousness, it ought to be uncontrolled—it is equally just that the sense and nonsense which indiscriminately issue from the immense vehicle of communication, should be subject to vigilant examination; otherwise the whole world would be over-run with abortions of the mind. We want the assistance of some guides, who will take upon themselves the trouble of separating the good from the bad, and wade through the troubled deep of literature, in order, if we may be permitted a continuation of the figure, to collect the pearls and gems, and to describe the useless weeds, whether swimming on the surface, or lying at the muddy bottom. A stupendous labour! if we consider the great disproportion betwixt the former and the latter. Applying this to the case in point, and it is by no means inapposite, a reader unused to such arduous undertakings, can image to himself no task so overwhelming as that of being left unaided to

VI. 107

search for instruction in the mass of productions which are every year piled, mountain high, before him. We will even suppose whatever is most beautiful in fancy, captivating to the heart, and informing to the intellect, under his eye; but he startles at the view of the enormous *quantity*, nor can any degree of excellence in the *quality* reconcile, or, indeed, justify him,—in a life so brief, and so connected with other duties as the present,—to the immeasurable fatigue of such a task. Even if there should be found a few persevering spirits, endowed with a fortitude to peruse all that comes to hand, the profit would be no ways answerable to the pain by which it must be procured. For this reason, it would be proper that there should be some professional inspectors to direct our choice, even were literary excellence and defect nearly equal. But when the average is on a ratio of at least ninety in the hundred in the scale of compositions *dead weight*, there is not, perhaps, any office so necessary as his, who, with patient circumspection, will examine the great account be-

twixt wisdom and folly, and settle the balance.

It is not, therefore, possible to conceive a more useful institution than that of a Literary Journal, when conducted with various ability and inflexible justice; nor can it be denied that a great variety of articles, in every branch of literature, have been analysed on these principles; and a due proportion of good has thence resulted to the community.

Numerous as are the critical reptiles above-mentioned, there are very many writers endued with the perseverance, judgment and candour, necessary to all the useful as well as valuable purposes I have just stated.

We have to boast even at this day, of great and noble critics; and from most, indeed, in all of our Literary Journals,* we find substantial

* It can be known only by the inhabitants of this country, and even those must have leisure for reading, and some capacity to discriminate and to decide, how much a general spirit of good writing is diffused over the British Empire, not only by compositions of length, of labour, and of high character, whether of genius or erudition, but by the most

evidence of unimpeachable judgment and unwarped integrity. It is not, however, to be expected, that any human association composed of many members, should be conducted on principles uniformly sagacious and correct. Were they to write apart, and consult together ultimately, there must even then often be a clash of sentiment, a dissonance of opinion.

Yet, I am persuaded, the critics above-described, are the very persons who most reprobate the virulences, and regret the errors for which they are made responsible. The literary body

slight mediums of information, amusement and ingenuity. Amidst the mass of things with which the Press continually teems, "Born—indeed designed—like numberless other created atoms, " but just to look about them and to die:" there are now to be seen monthly and daily instances to confirm this assertion; and a judicious separator of the heterogeneous farrago that mixes with and makes up an English Magazine or Newspaper of the present day, might give to the public an annual selection of real worth, acceptable not only to readers of one class or profession, but of all. While our correspondence is at Press, I have read two examples—the one on a subject of criticism, the other of our national benevolence. "A series of observations on the Poem of the Pursuits of Literature, publishing in a print called the "Morning Herald," and an eulogy on our Public Charities in a Sunday Paper called the "Observer."

cannot be supposed to separate, or seem to move a limb independently ;—much less to commit themselves, and confederate against each other, by deploring the want of candour in some of their colleagues, and of capacity in others. Thus from their not being associated by congeniality, or chosen by consent—and yet under a kind of compact to hold together, and by the good faith that should be preserved in all treaties, bound to support one another in the way of a common cause—the errors, incongruities, adulations and virulences, which are observed occasionally to disfigure their journals, attach indiscriminately to all.

A man must write from the spirit of envy, or from pique, or ignorance, if he assents not to these arguments because there is monthly confirmation of them. And of the authors who have, individually, to complain of uncandid treatment, or partial representation, there cannot be one who has genius and candour, in his own mind and heart, but must see and feel there is often just criticism, in the very publication where his *own* performance may be slighted or aspersed.

If, therefore, like every other valuable institution, abuse has crept into this; if prejudice and prepossession too often vault into the chair, and instead of its becoming a *Judgment-seat*, where the labours of the human mind are to have a fair trial, it is frequently a *secret Tribunal*, where the judges are wholly unknown, and the facts judged, so unfairly selected and argued, although formed into the most serious charges, that the work which ought to be condemned is acquitted, and the production that deserves to receive distinguished honours,—is, by this ungenerous artifice, supposed to be guilty of all the imperfections imputed to it.—

If, what by a misnomer is called criticism, the mutilated parts of a book are sometimes given as specimens of its general character—If, in offering an author's argument without reference to the context—by which alone its force or feebleness is to be determined—the most important and admirable reasoning is torn from its antecedent and consequent, like a limb hacked from the body, and presented in a mangled state, to serve as a measure for the

harmony and beauty of the whole; * or if, which is not more generous, or reasonable, a frequently licentious, sometimes malignant display is made of ill-grounded *ridicule*—a power, by which all things, the most grave and sacred, however happy they may be, in their conception and delivery—are discoloured, distorted, tending to excite the very reverse impression of that they probably *would* have made, on a mind unseduced by the intemperate sally of misapplied or ill-tempered wit—and all this to indulge

* “ A perfect judge will read each work of wit
With the same spirit that its author writ ;
Survey the WHOLE, nor seek a fault to find
Where Nature moves, and rapture warms the mind.

* * * * *

Whoever thinks a faultless piece to see,
Thinks what ne'er was, nor is, nor e'er shall be.
In every work regard the writer's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend ;
And if the means be just, the conduct true,
Applause, in spite of trivial faults, is due.

* * * * *

Learn then what MORAL Critics ought to show ;
For 'tis but half a judge's task to know.
'Tis not enough, taste, judgment, learning, join ;
In all you speak, let TRUTH and CANDOUR shine.”

POPE'S ESSAY ON CRITICISM.

the miserable propensity of raising a laugh against what, even at worst, is, perhaps, the best effort of its author to please the public; and who, possibly, in the bitterness of his disappointment, weeps not only over the loss of that daily bread which the scorner earns by his taunts, but which the industrious author has often earned more honestly than his critic—if, while it must be owned there are numberless objects, which deserve to be assailed by all the powers of wit, this dangerous talent snatches the honest morsel from the lip of Genius, for the paltry triumph of saying “a good thing;”—if those compositions which deserve our reverence, and which, perhaps, have delighted even the defamer himself privately, have, nevertheless, been publicly sacrificed—If the attempt to turn performances of indubitable merit and labour into ridicule,* by shewing them under

* There is, perhaps, in the nature of wit a proneness to mischief, which, by indulgence, grows to an inveterate habit. Perhaps, there is in human nature itself, a turn for the ridiculous; but in generous minds this propensity is corrected and meliorated till strong occasion invites it. Our

absurd circumstances, is but too successfully practised. If, "the sovereigns of Reason, and the artificers and purveyors of our most exquisite pleasures," *—those of the intellect are unquestionably of that order—if the rightful Critic upon the human understanding, is, by the common and inevitable lot of all corporate bodies, thus unfortunately mixt with those critical usurpers, who with pontifical pride, fulminate their defamatory bulls against Genius and Learning, in ignorant pomposity or in rude impertinence—If such accusations are well founded, depend upon it, those who are the true protectors, advocates, and guardians of Literature—the TRUE critics—even while by a sacred duty they are constrained to reprehend, punish, or wholly condemn some of the

enemy could not suddenly sprain his ancle within our view, but a kind of irresistible pity would impel us to step forward to his assistance; but if it were waggishly represented, even that a *friend*, in falling from his horse, had disordered his wig, dropt it from his head, or any other way ludicrously exposed himself, we might join in the laugh till we discovered the nature of the accident, though he should have broken his leg.

* The acute and animated Mr. D'ISRAELI,

votaries of Science and the Muses, *they* are the persons most touched and aggrieved whenever the numerous pettifoggers of Literature, any of those unprincipled usurpers with whom, by imperious circumstances, they may be blended, have perplexed or lost the cause of real Genius or Learning. The verdict, it is true, is always given by the PUBLIC—our Literary Grand Jury—but, if by false reasoning, or false impression, by partial evidence, or by corrupt influence, it is practised upon and misguided, the sentence would of course be unjust, though it might have the sanction of a majority of the council and of the judges.

It is the advice of LONGINUS to the Poet, that, on perusing his composition, he should seriously ask himself, whether on such an occasion, HOMER would have written such verses? It seems no less expedient, for a Critic to consult his own heart, and ask, whether LONGINUS would confirm his judgment and ratify his opinions? But when we reflect on the great masters of antiquity, their chaste and simple, yet bold and animated criticisms, the

soundness of their judgment and the extent of their erudition, who shall forbear blushing for the petty cavils and peevish puerilities of our times? It were to be wished that such Critics and such Judges, would remember the fate of ZOILUS: for though they may seldom have a HOMER to criticise, they may discover equal ignorance and equal malignity in analyzing even the dullest of his commentators.

With respect to READERS, there is a feebleness in the mind that has been warped by early dependance. It has so long been under the dominion of others, that it fears to judge for itself; like childhood in leading-strings, or age under its crutches, we often tremble to walk alone, and know not the degree of our intellectual strength. They who have been accustomed to take up the opinions of others, seem even to forget they have a *right* to form any of their own; and in cases of literary judgment, so far from asserting any independency, they are afraid either to praise or blame, to be pleased or angry, till they learn, from the higher powers, how far they *ought* to approve or

condemn. And it is well known that many persons neither venture to purchase, nor even to peruse a book till they have seen what these arbiters of the intellect say of it: nay, such is the degree of subjugation in which these despots hold some of their slaves, that I have personal knowledge of a man of no mean understanding, who confessed his vassalage was at one time so extreme from the force of habit, and the want of fortitude, that his impatience to read a work of which the title had attracted him, and feeling it impossible to wait for the permission of his judges, he had the temerity to be delighted on the authority of his own emotions, but soon repented of his rashness: a decree was issued against the performance on the first day of the succeeding month, the adventurous Reader *

* You acknowledged the receipt of, and honoured me with your sentiments upon the new edition of a novel, wherein I had the hardihood to interweave subjects of greater strength than are usually admitted into that species of composition. I intended it as an *experiment*, and to say it did not succeed, would be ungrateful to general criticism, as well as to the public: Yet, to the majority of Readers, by whom works of that sort are most appreciated, and who require

found out that his untutored nature had yielded to impulses unsanctioned by his tyrants, and on

a rapid story, wherein the heart may indulge its affections without check or controul, it was suggested to me, the work might be more acceptable, were the progress of the fable less impeded. I accordingly disencumbered the subsequent edition of all irrelevant matter; reserving to myself, however, the privilege of introducing the literary discussions in some other place. Our correspondence, my friend, offers that place, and the subject immediately under consideration, will, I trust, derive some light from the following dialogue, abridged from what appeared in the edition* preceding that I had the pleasure to send you.

“ In relief of the serious studies came in the intellectual amusements of the three brothers.† The juvenile muse of the younger, by her light and playful sallies, pleasantly contrasted and agreeably set off the more solid, not to say solemn meditations of John; thence, indeed, and from an early sorrow, the very sports of the latter took an awful turn. He read the poets as a relaxation from the philosophers, yet he read them not as an enthusiast, but as a critic; and therefore detected more faults than beauties. Henry, on the other hand, with all the ardour of poetic passion, read, as he wrote, to be delighted, and so found more beauties than faults; he was too much in love with the muse to look severely for, or at, her little inconsistencies, and, as is the case with all lovers, was too sincerely smit with the charms of his object to be angry at her foibles.

* Family Secrets.

† John, James, and Henry Fitzorton.

a second perusal, he discovered how very hasty he had been in pronouncing that to be simple,

"This dissimilitude in their opinions, however, was a fresh source of amicable contention.

"Ah! how do I wish my dearest father," said Henry, after giving the matter a little rest, "that you would deign to settle our ever-jarring opinions on this subject. Yours have, indeed, been already favourable, but John, I perceive, wants constant repetitions of high authority to make him think well of any art but his own." "I admit what you have related, brother, to be poetry," replied John, "and some of its fire has reached me, but there is no degree of authority can make me an *advocate* for palpable absurdity, whether in life or literature, in verse or in prose, though the undue exercise of such authority, which I can never have to fear from our father, might make me silent."

John bowed respectfully to Sir Armine, who took his hand cordially, and smiled kindly on Henry. "You must not, my Harry," said the impartial James, "suffer your name to be catalogued amongst the irritable race; nor must you, my dear John, be ranked amongst the snarlers of the day. From true criticism, a poet should not shrink; and false, can ultimately do him no harm. Let John's censure, therefore, rather animate Henry to triumph over what may be hypercritical, and to remove from his composition what may be really objectionable." "In the days of youth," said Sir Armine,— "they are commonly days of intrepidity, I was myself, you must know, hardy enough to write—yea, and to write a romance."

"A romance, Sir!" questioned John? "Verily, a romance," answered his father. "Where is it, Sir, what is

tender and elegant, which his critics had proved, by a variety of instances, and which they would

its name? I never heard you mention it before," observed Henry, earnestly. "I can easily conceive the reason of that," cried John significantly. "You think," said Sir Armine, "I was ashamed of having misemployed my time." "The wisest youth hath its indiscretions, Sir," observed John, respectfully. "Had it been a treatise on Philosophy, it would not have been thought indiscreet, I dare say," cried Henry tartly, looking at John, "and I have not a doubt, but my dear father had every reason to be proud of it," continued Henry. "In truth, neither proud nor ashamed," replied his father. "You shall hear; when I had written my romance—it really was a romance, John; there is no denying it; I felt curiosity to collect the private sentiments of acquaintance upon my labours."—"Labours, Sir!" interrupted John, drily. "Yes, labours, son John; there may be serious labour in giving the ease of nature to every work of art. In case the general sense of a private circle had been against me, prudence, I had hope, might prevail with vanity," John shook his head, "to take warning from the 'still small voice,' of limited disapprobation, without provoking the clamour of public censure." And as to criticism, every body is, naturally, more or less, a critic, in whatever respects the emotions and passions of human nature, and the joy or sorrow of human life. Nay, every family is a little world of critics.

"Brother James," cried Henry, "how can you be reading that abominable Wood's Institutes, at a time like this, when my dearest father is just beginning to read his novel?"

probably have undertaken to prove against Nature herself.

"In the progress of reading," continued Sir Armine, "I experienced all that can be exhibited of human variety, in human opinions. The favourite passage or character of one hearer, became the furious objection of another: some approved only of the *pathos*, others yawned and nodded in the midst of it. These, again, were awaked by a laugh, which threw my patherical admirers into the vapours. Some objected to the length, some to the brevity: trash, trumpery, stuff, nonsense! obligingly echoed one of the party.—Delightful, charming! incomparable! resounded another fair auditor.

"And pray, Sir," questioned Henry, sighing, "what in this perplexing counter-action of judgment, did you do?"*

"I considered, that if a composition deserved to travel down the stream of time, unjust criticism would not long obstruct its course. That which is imperishable in its own nature, shall assert its immortality amongst things immortal; nor can any degree of elaborate panegyric restore to life what oblivion has swept away, at the command of reason and truth."

"Ah! I feel the sacred truths, Sir," cried Henry; "but, methinks, I should have lost all confidence in myself, and dropt the trembling pen."

* But from an impotence or timidity of a Reader's judgment, and his dependence on that of others, many very promising productions of young writers are never read after the Critics have proscribed them.

At the same time, it must be owned, professional critics have a hard task to perform,

"I would have held mine the faster, or mended it," rejoined John, "if I found it worth the pains; if not, I would have thrown it away, and taken up a more useful instrument."

"Alas! I fear, I should have renounced the press at once," said Henry. "No doubt," retorted John, "there are cowards enough in the world; and their fine timidity may, for aught I know, be a mark of genius; but give me the soul rough, determined, and if you will, inelegant, which, like the mountain pine, however it may for a moment bend to the blast, rises again as often as it is assailed."

"I have wondered at nothing more," replied James, "than at the unfair dealings of readers with authors."

"Authors with readers I believe you mean," quoth John.

"Rather," continued James, "it is matter of surprise to me, that considering the injustice of readers there should be any authors at all."

"Now you have mended it!" cried John.

"James has reason on his side, notwithstanding," said Sir Armine.

"It appears to me, Sir," answered James, respectfully, "that the *golden mean* finds as few friends amongst books as among men;—a certain extravagance pervades all things.—Every reader, more or less, exercises the tyranny of a critic, if the work happens to be adapted to the degree of his capacity and modes of feeling, no panegyric seems warm enough; if it be written above or below that capacity, those modes, or different from his general idea, or particular experience, or the temper of the moment, there is not any censure deemed strong enough to condemn it."

even when their fund of candour and sagacity, their heads and hearts are equally rich. Consider,

“ Were I to be desperate enough to write another book,” said Sir Armine, “ methinks I would try a new experiment. I would write up to the capacity and feeling of half a dozen persons, with whose different dispositions I had acquaintance : for argument’s sake, we will suppose the characters to stand thus—a philosopher, a poet, a divine, a humourist, a politician, and a man of the world ; for each of whom I would prepare some essay, treatise, or poem, suitable to their respective genius. But, agreeably to the design I had in view, I would so arrange these, that, presuming each to be excellent in its kind, two very contrary effects should be produced by that arrangement. The book being ready, I would take care that the six persons for whom it was intended, should be summoned to a private recital, in a more finished and select way than before. I would commence my experiments on the humourist, delineating that singularity, whim, or weakness in mind or manners, in which he would most delight, but which my man of the world would pronounce ‘ execrable stuff ;’ the philosopher,—‘ beneath the dignity of the human understanding ;’ — the poet, ‘ despicable ;’ — the divine, ‘ frivolous ;’ — the politician, ‘ absurd.’ — I would then make an attempt upon the rest indiscriminately, and should certainly find that the pleasure of one, while his favourite subject was before him, would have a nearly contrary effect on the others ; until in the end, each man would depart with a favourable impression of the work, not because it might be *generally* excellent, but because the particular taste, and, perhaps, predominant passion of each had been gratified.— Were you the next day,” continued Sir Armine, “ to hear

my friend, their drudgery. How often are they condemned to waste the most precious of all things

the philosopher passing his opinion on the performance to any friends of his own description, he would tell you there was one essay worth all the rest :—The bard would recommend it to his brethren of the laurel, purely for the poem : The politician, for its happy strokes at ministry or the opposition : The divine, for its polemics : The man of fashion, for its elegance in trifling ; and the humourist, for that display of character, which, though seen every hour in life, is always welcome to men of his disposition, when found in books. Thus, if every book could be ushered into the world with such an experiment, the reading of it would be general : but my complaint is, that were such a book to be placed in the way of six such readers *separately*, without a table of contents to anticipate the subjects, and should it happen that the order in which the book was opened, presented the philosophy to the humourist,—the divinity to the man of fashion, the airy pleasantries to the divine, the politics to the bard, and the poetry to the politician, my poor book would call forth more vengeance against it, than was ever fulminated at a miserable culprit from that book of pious curses—the Romish excommunication.”

“ Your quarrel with readers then, Sir,” said James, quietly, “ is for their want of candour, and of patience. You would wish them to begin dispassionately, to sit down to their author with a mind disposed to be pleased, and proceed to the end before they passed judgment. Just as we do in legal affairs. And there ought to be courts of justice, no doubt, in literature, as well as in law.”

in this brief world—time and temper,—on what frequently cannot repay the attention of a single hour. The pious Roman deplored pathetically the loss of a single day: the English professors of criticism have to bewail the consumption of months, and of years. And though by a long habit of reading with design to analyze, they may acquire a facility of seeing the force or feebleness of a subject, we frequently perceive the most painful internal evidence of their having honestly, but laboriously, waded through, and even plunged profoundly into the troubled waters of ignorance and vanity, without even finding one drop of wit or wisdom at the muddy bottom. And, how many a weary league on the waste land of literature must they pass, even after they have emerged, before they arrive at the realms of poesy, realms, where they may purify in streams of the genuine Castaly, and luxuriate amongst flowers of the true Parnassus? or hope to taste of those ripe and rare fruits which adorn the groves and gardens of true philosophy?

But, O how sweet, you will exclaim, must be the recompence, when, after all their toils, the lettered adventurers reach those enchanting climes. True, my friend, harassed and disappointed, can we be surprised if sometimes the best critic, and best tempered man should be too much fatigued with labouring over barren ground, and fretted at meeting disagreeable or disgusting company by the way, he should, for a while, be indisposed to enjoy more fertile land, or more beautiful scenery? He has escaped as from a wreck, and wishes for nothing so much as a resting place, even were he thrown upon the treeless heath, or unsheltered beach.

Our writers, therefore, must participate the blame with our critics; and thus, even the most valuable of the former, must sometimes be content to receive a slight if not a wound from the most just and honourable of the latter. But this can rarely happen, and we are still, for the most part, to attribute bad criticism of good composition, to bad critics;

and if they depreciate *willingly*, not *ignorantly*, even to bad men. Literary property, to speak of it only as it refers to genius and honour, exclusively of labour or reward, is certainly as important, and as dear as any that may be called our worldly substance. Ought it not then to be as sacred? "He who filches from us our good fame" is a robber; and as the treasures of the mind, may be taken, like our purses, by assassins under a mask, and as even our English laws have provided no punishment for an apprehended offender *this way*—except for the poor, and comparatively innocent thief who steals our intellectual children, to deface and mutilate them gypsy fashion, that they may very well pass for *his own*—as, moreover, there is no award of damages in relief of the sufferers, and, amongst all the great public works, as we have no literary *scandalum magnatum*, nor even one poor clause in favour of defrauded authors in our *black acts*—though a wanton critic should plunder a man of genius, not only of reputation, but of bread—and as, notwithstanding the general impotence of false

criticism, this must, sometimes, have been done, —a reform in LITERARY ESTABLISHMENTS, would certainly be another grand national object of this country; and it is a great pity insurmountable difficulties are in the way of it.

Yet, as the whole world is now said to want a reform, and as there are, luckily, more reformers than there *can* be defects, to whatever number the latter may amount—most likely a hundred reformers to a single defect—and as every reformer has been, and continues to be, hard, *very* hard at work with his voice, his pen, and his sword—all powerful weapons—why it may be hoped that when every thing else is in the state of PERFECTION, to which many of the religious, and all the political prophets of the age, assure us all things are advancing,—yea, with the strides of a giant, though every stride, those prophets cannot but allow, have been, and must still be made in human gore; while battle, murder, and sudden death, must rally round the standard of reformation, and the desolating *angel*—should I not write DEMON?—brings up the rear, with nothing but a ruin

for the trophy, and a blood-dropping laurel to mark the progress, or grace the triumph of the *spirit* of PERFECTABILITY—still, I say, Baron, we may hope, that even authors, yea, and critics, may come in for some few of the good things in the new land of promise. Indeed, when whatever is wanted in ethics, politics, and religion shall be supplied, and when every thing that is now crooked in a world which has so long had a twist, shall be made strait;—when, in fine, we are to be made *perfect upon earth*, a privilege we have been blindly taught for three thousand years, was a work reserved *for heaven*—it would be hard, indeed, if literature should not be entitled to a share.

Animated by this joyful hope, and I am sure you see the reasonableness of it as clearly as myself, we must be content to receive all things with the old leaven, and to accept of bad with good authors, and critics, in this bad, good, but, it seems, *perfectionizing* world.

Yet, while that world, and this small, but lovely part of it, contains a true friend, fixes a

sentiment of honour in the mind, an emotion of tenderness in the heart, displays a warm sun over our heads, and spreads a fair expanse of generous land at our feet, I shall in proud, but reverential imitation of the great Bestower, continue to see that "IT IS GOOD," and most gratefully bless the Giver and the gift!

P. S. Since the time of sending these letters, two new literary journals have been established; and both have begun their career under every fair and favourable auspice. Their plan is generous, their professions liberal; and if their practice continues to confirm them, they will prove a valuable addition to the national stock of just criticism, while they serve at the same time as a farther atonement for what is disgraceful to literature, and its guardians. The one is called the "ANTI-JACOBIN REVIEW, and Magazine; or Monthly Political and Literary Censor: and the other the "NEW LONDON REVIEW; or Monthly Report of Authors and Books." My promised parcel shall enclose the numbers which have hitherto been published of both. You will receive them as specimens

of their respective pretensions. They propose to accomplish the same objects, and on the same honourable principle:—a determination to counteract the designs of those writers, whether Reviewers, or others, “who labour to undermine our civil and religious establishments, and to restore criticism to its original standard;” *—“to notice in terms of severe and unequivocal reprehension whatever disturbs the public harmony, insults legal authority, outrages the best regards of the heart, invalidates the radical obligations of morality, attacks the vital springs, and established functions of piety; or in any respect clashes with the sacred forms of decency, however witty, elegant, and otherwise well written.” † To furnish, in short, an honest and exact report of what is passing among those engaged in the pursuit of Science and polite Learning, and to give such a picture of it in its present cultivated state, as may do honour

* Anti-Jacobin.

† London Review.

to the English Press, and such as men of polished and enlightened minds delight to contemplate.

○ Inasmuch as the new journalists shall effect such noble ends by such laudable means, they will not only reflect credit on themselves but deserve well of their country; they may then, indeed, call their work registers of domestic literature, animated by a spirit of manly and liberal criticism; and they will materially contribute to illustrate the sentiment which the new London Reviewers have chosen for the motto of their prospectus, "Reviews show the progress of a country, or an age, in taste and arts, in refinement of manners, and in the cultivation of science. They mark the gradation of language itself, and the progressive or retrograde motions of the public mind upon the most interesting subjects in ethics, in politics, and religion."

○ Were I not fully persuaded you will read this terse and polished sentence, with the liberal spirit, yet limited sense, in which it must have been *written*,—by the very learned and ingenious author, DR. PARR, one of the chief ornaments

of erudition,—I should desire you to place the *helping* verb *should* between the first and second words of the passage, to signify the *time* WHEN the golden age of pure criticism shall return; not admitting we now enjoy it unreservedly.

LETTER XVII.

FAKENHAM, *August 27, 1798.*

THERE is not much to be said for this small town, but the little that truth affords will be to its advantage—Compact, neat, and agreeable are its epithets. The environs are in a part of the county which corresponds to this engaging character; and at the distance of a few miles, you are presented with beauties of a very distinguished kind. In its vicinity is RAINHAM-HALL, very deservedly enumerated amongst the beauties of England. Amidst other capital paintings, that of Belisarius, by Salvator Rosa, has been particularly noticed. It is said to be the gift of the GREAT Frederick of Prussia. ARTHUR YOUNG, whose Tour into this county is published, and which I recommend to your

attention, particularly the part which treats of the Norfolk husbandry, has marked Mr. STRANGE's print from this painting as admirable; though there is a doubt amongst the connoisseurs whether, after all, the original picture represents Belisarius or Caius Marius. It is not without good reason, that another Tourist has preferred the *situation* of this mansion to that of any other in the county, and he justly observes, that the country around is rich, and *comfort-looking*. The park and woods have been estimated at about 800 acres : and the house itself has the advantage of being built under the superintendence of Inigo Jones. The river on which the town stands might, probably, be called *Fa-ken*, part of which word, anciently, denoted water, as HAM, in the time of the Saxons, did a dwelling.

But, there is something better than the finest edifice that the above-named great architect has left us as a memorial of his art;—something more delightful to the traveller even than glassy lakes, vivid lawns, or luxuriant woods—the urbanity and benevolence of its present

noble possessor. By means of the first quality, every stranger who has the air and manners of a gentleman may become a guest, and by virtue of the last, all whose deservings are at all known may become its object; and those who have claims upon that benevolence on the simple recommendation of poverty, or the more sacred one of misfortune, will have their claims allowed. This is not only a county-character, but a good name, that, gathering well-earn'd plaudits as it goes, spreads to the remotest part of Great Britain; and in the course of a long and estimable life must have travelled into more distant lands.

The Marquis has filled many great official situations, with honour to himself, and service to his country. With a great share of facile wit, he commixes a yet greater proportion of good-humour; and if you should encounter him in any of the walks or rides around his domain, he will soon make you forget that you see him for the first time, or that you have been introduced to him only by the affability of his own disposition.

I thus delineate him, my dear Baron, on more powerful testimony than my own, or that of any individual. He is amongst the few, whose domestic and public reputation may be trusted to,—in general a very faithless historian—common report; and although I know him but by a transient view, I have so long been in the habit of hearing him spoken of, by persons of very different minds, that whenever by any accident he has met my eye, I have looked at him with as much conscious feeling of being intimate, as if I had *seen* the transactions which have built up the fair superstructure of his character; * nay, seen its basis—his generous heart.

* The celebration of Marquis Townshend's birthday a few months since in Ireland, was one of the most brilliant, and at the same time the most truly affectionate, to that excellent Nobleman, which has occurred in the course of thirty-one years, since his friends established there this annual tribute of gratitude; the recollection of political benefits is seldom long-lived, and in ordinary cases personal affection does not often survive so many years of absence; yet, we see in the instance of Lord Townshend, the recollection of public services cherished even by the *children*

"**FAKENHAM**," says one of its old describers, "is famous for nothing, but for having had salt-pits formerly;"—but a young historian of the place, whom I have just met, assures me, it can at present boast of something else. My intelligencer is a female, whose prompt but apt reply to my question, occasioned the following information: the truism it contains, is not diminished by being in verse, even though composed on horseback, and in a canter. I beg to call it

THE RULE OF THREE.

"Whose house is that, my pretty lass,
All fine, and *red*, with wings so wide,

So gay, one cannot by it pass—

And that so *white*, on t'other side?

of those on whom they were conferred; and esteem for his private worth evinced by men who could only have learned it from the sincere and grateful testimony of their fathers.

So happy and so unanimous a company as that of March 14, the Anniversary of the Marquis, is not often to be met; the occasion seemed to inspire every man with cheerfulness.

Amongst the toasts which circulated on this occasion were—The Marquis Townshend, the *true and long-tried Friend of Ireland*, and that the many who love him in

" And that, my dear, which doth uplift
 Its head so high, be-tow'r'd at top ?"
 " There, please you, Sir, dwells parson Thrift,
 Here, Lawyer Claw, there Doctor Lopp."

This answer, Baron, serves for all,
 Sure as there's physic, gospel, law,
 In every town at which you call,
 You'll find a Thrift, a Lopp, and Claw.

And such this lucky Trio's lot
 When you have journey'd England round,
 You'll see that it has always got
 The three best things on English ground,

Best *house*, best *living*, and best *pay* ;
 And e'er you thrice three leagues have been,
 I, thrice three pounds, to one will lay
 You'll note the lucky Wights I mean,

that kingdom may have frequent returns of celebrating this day.

The Marchioness Townshend—in beauty, virtue, and conduct, the ornament of her sex—And the different branches of the family of this venerable and amiable Nobleman,

Are Doctor, Lawyer-man, and Priest;
Worthies, I ween, decreed by fate
On *thrice one* more best things to feast,
On *mind*, and *body*, and *estate*.

But if, as sometimes you will view,
To body, a fair face should join,
That takes the lead of t'other two
With Lawyer, Doctor, and Divine.

Though still observe, the wights agree,
So zealous is their guardian care
To part between them *all the three*,
And for the happy people's share

Leave preachments, parchments, drugs in plenty,
And what, my friend, can be more kind!
Wish you a *suit*? they give you twenty,
And what does wealth, but load the mind?

That load they take; and Priest will tell
What makes the penniless still even,
Gold, often leads the rich to hell,
Quoth he—the poor go light to heaven.

Then as for physic, when your breath

Is all that's left 'twixt skin and bone;

Doctor can serve you after death,

And save your very *skeleton*!

Laud then, O muse! the generous three,

Who on themselves, take all our evil;

Keep from the worms—the body free,

And the soul rescue from the devil."

It seems worse than a slight, an injustice to nature, and to art,—a neglect of some of their best displays, in this fair country, to pass unnoticed the mansion and domain of Mr. COKE, at a short and beautiful ride from Fakenham. The truth is, I paid my visit to these, under the most unfavourable circumstances: first from ignorance, or rather forgetfulness, that the house is open to public curiosity only one day in the week, (Tuesday,) and I was luckless enough not to select that one; a circumstance, however, which would not have been an interruption to *you*, my dear Baron, because foreigners have an exception in their

favour. I had still, you will say, the most inviting part of the property before me :

“ All that is out of door
Most rich ;”

but, disappointment likes company, you know, and did not on this occasion come alone. A fair-seeming day broke its promise to me, and scarce allowed one lucid interval that I could rely on : and whenever I did, though deceived before, put my trust in a smiling moment to glance over the ample park, the twenty-acred lake, and the embellishing plantations, I was soon taught the rashness of believing in appearances, and forced to take shelter under some of the majestic trees, till even *they* poured down their vengeance on my head, and I was glad to seek the more solid protection of an exceeding good inn, which offered an invitation I very gladly accepted.

There, however, the very circumstance I had been lamenting was the means of my gaining some particulars which neither sunshine nor shade could so soon have procured.

When the storm "is pitiless" the nearest asylum becomes welcome. On entering the inn I found it filled to the gate-way, and out-houses, as well as the passages of the house, with people of as different manners as sizes. The historians of the moment were numerous, and dealing forth their knowledge to a listening party, which I remembered to have seen in the park, and which, like myself, had been tempest-driven out of it; for the showers were not more sudden than severe. It is pleasing to gather a man's character from a groupe of persons thus assembled. Their sentiments are as spontaneous as the occasion that brought them together. They are, therefore, to be depended upon: more particularly where those who dissent essentially on one point, are unanimous in others of at least equal importance. Of these delineators of the mind and manners of the present proprietor of HOLKHAM, though there were many, who thought altogether differently, and more than one, who was in avowed opposition to him, in what is supposed to be his politics—a difference in which even the nearest

there than in their own houses.

bonds of consanguinity, and the dearest ties of friendship are often sacrificed in this country—they perfectly agreed in describing him as one whose possessions of fortune were not more estimable, not more splendid than those of his heart; the benignity of which, indeed, gave them their highest value and use. “If a landholder cannot thrive upon one of MR. COKE’S farms, and pay his rent into the bargain,” said one of my weather-associated biographers, “he must be a sot, or a prodigal; and if there are any persons in Holkham, or in any of the parishes where this gentleman has property, who *can* be truly called *poor* folks, whether they can labour or not, it must be where it would not only be a weakness, and almost a wickedness to encourage them.” “That, I believe, every one in any of those parishes will allow,” observed another; “and as to his friends,” added this last describer, “they may be as much at their ease at Holkham house, as if they were at home, and I have heard many gentlemen say, if they find any difference, it is in the attendance and attention being more constant and watchful there than in their own houses.”

“Norfolk is fortunate in this respect,” remarked a gentleman who had not taken any part in the conversation before. He then spoke of some whom I have already mentioned, and adjoined the amiable owner of NARFORD; then, by a most unexpected transition, and in a most pointed manner, he contrasted those worthies by describing a very reverse character; one, whose immense property neither afforded happiness to others, nor to himself; who sought solitude without any apparent relish of its wise, or sacred powers—who shrunk from the eye of the traveller with as much haste as the Lord of Rainhim advanced towards it—who even shunned the face of day, and travelled in the most heart-rejoicing season, through the finest countries, usually by night; while his estate, yeomanry, peasantry and neighbourhood exhibited the marks of an unsocial man.”—Possibly, my friend, an unhappy one; and if so, alas! he may be trying—it is to be feared, vainly—to escape from himself. And although, no doubt, the best, and the most blessed way to soothe us, even under this evil, is to occupy

ourselves in the good of others; to spread the industrious over our fields and gardens; to give new beauties to the earth, and fresh bounties to its poorer inhabitants; to command the artist to display his talent, while he augments its just reward, to make nature herself more rich, more lovely; and at length beckon honourable friendship to mark our improvements, while faithful love has seen, and assisted their progress; or invoke *active* contemplation,—and may I not be suffered so to call the study, or the science that in a condition of hoarded sorrow keeps us beneficially employed? though these are certainly the most wise, and the most salutary means of forgetting ourselves, or of obliuating what we wish not to remember of others, yet, not the habits only, but the temperament, the indolence, or the inveteracy which sometimes character the effects of grief, or result from its causes, may prevent applying to such lenitives, or receiving from them any solace. In such cases, without knowing how far they may apply in the present, shall we not deplore the state of a human being thus

shut by his own hand into a prison, which, however splendid to the passenger, has the darkness of the tomb to the self-devoted, and shall not pity, though uninvited, follow him there?

The weather continued equally unpropitious during the whole day and evening, and having an early engagement for this morning, I have been obliged to leave Holkham-House, and its varied attractions, unexamined by my own eye. The eyes of so many observers, have, however, been so long upon it, that there can be no other difficulty in presenting to you a description, but what arises—from not knowing which to prefer.

One great feature of objection, indeed, which I cannot but feel against the very sight of *fine places* upon *paper*, arises from the repetition of the very terms by which they are described. Varied and abundant as is our language, a whole warehouse of words, a magazine of epithets are soon at an end, when we come to five quadrangles, four wings and a centre, saloons of forty-two feet by twenty-seven, drawing-rooms thirty-three by *twenty-two*,

and a statue gallery, of which the middle part consists of seventy feet by *twenty-two*, and at each end an octagon of *twenty-two*, with whatever of rich and rare can be put into these by the hand of fortune, or arranged by that of taste, which is, I understand, with as few exceptions as may be, the case at Holkham-House. The words *beautiful, fine, sublime, light, magnificent, brilliant, elegant* and *exquisite*, are forced upon such hard, yet necessary duty, that the only chance one has of not being sickened of looking at them is, if possible, to vary their position so as not to make them come too thick and fast upon us in the same order.

“The house may be said to consist of five quadrangles, the centre and the four wings; not that they are squares, but we use the term to give a general idea. Each of the two fronts thereof present a centre and two wings. That to the South, and the grand approach, is as *beautiful, light, airy, and elegant* a building as can be viewed. The gilding of the window frames and sashes of this front, done in 1777, by the present Mr. Coke, gives it a *magnificent*

appearance. The portico is in a fine taste, and the Corinthian pillars *beautifully* proportioned. This central front, in every respect that can be named, appears all *lightness, elegance, and proportion.*"

This is all very true, I dare say, as also what is said of the saloon—"that it is in an *elegant* taste, the pier glasses exceedingly *elegant*, the agate tables *beautiful*, the state bed-chamber (30 by 24,) fitted up in a most *elegant* style, that the colours of the tapestry are *brilliant*, the chimney-piece remarkably *beautiful*, the figure of the Diana in the statue-gallery is *fine*, and the turn of the arms *inimitable*—the Venus also, in the wet drapery, and the form of the limbs seen through the cloathing *exquisite*—neither can it be denied that the fitting up the house in all particulars is in the highest degree *elegant.*"

But the reverberation of the epithets, though, perhaps, inevitable, return so rapidly, not only in the above description, but in almost every other, they seem to have the mockery of the echo without its sweetness, the routine of the

parrot without her drollery ; and have sometimes brought to my mind the mountebank orator, with his “ *Walk in ladies and gentlemen, walk in, and see what you shall see*—the most beautiful tyger—the most amazingly—astonishing fine leopard, and the most magnanimously—magnificent lion that was ever shewn in Europe !” Then running the stunning eloquence back again with no other relief to the ear than beginning with the lion, and ending with the tyger.

You enter into the *spirit* of an observation too clearly, and with too much candour to imagine that I wish to depreciate the real grandeur or beauty of this noble mansion, or its domain, which is universally ranked amongst the *triumphs* of the island. Indeed, the inside of the house,* in point of *contrivance*, is

* That which renders Mr. Coke's seat superior to perhaps any other in the kingdom, all the Norfolk historians seem to agree is its *convenience* ; and they vary very little in their proofs of this assertion. In the first place with respect to the state-apartments : from the hall to the saloon, on each side a

allowed to surpass any other in the kingdom, for being so *admirably* adapted to our English way of living.

drawing-room, through one of them to the state dressing-room and bed-chamber : this is perfectly complete. Through the other drawing-room to the statue gallery, which may be called the rendezvous room, and connects a number of apartments together, in an admirable manner ; for one octagon opens into the private wing, and the other into the strangers on one side, and into the dining-room on the other. This dining-room is on one side of the hall, on the other is Mrs. Coke's dressing-room, and through that her bed-chamber and closets. From the recess in the dining-room opens a little door on the stair-case, which leads immediately to the offices ; and it should be observed, that in the centre of the wings, by the centre of the house, by the saloon door, and behind Mrs. Coke's closet, are stair-cases quite unseen, which communicate with all the rooms, and lead down into the offices. We say *down* ; for the hall is the only room seen on the ground floor ; you step directly from a coach into it, without any quarry of winding steps to wet a lady to the skin, before she gets under cover. From the hall you rise to the saloon or first floor, and there is no attic. Thus there are four general apartments, which are all distinct from each other, with no reciprocal thoroughfares ; the state—Mrs. Coke's—the late Earl's—and the strangers' wing. These severally open into what may be called common rooms, the hall, statue-gallery, and saloon, and all immediately communicate with the dining-room. There may be houses larger and more magnificent,

But I confess, my friend, I go on the wing of impulse to every thing that has HEART in it,

but human genius can never contrive any thing more *convenient*.

To give a proper idea of the plantations, park, and other objects which environ this *museum* of taste and elegance; we shall enter Holkham parish by the road leading from Lynn to Wells, where twelve small clumps of trees surrounding the triumphal arch, first catch the attention, and give warning of an *approach*.—Turning into a gate on the left, the road leads under the TRIUMPHAL ARCH. Crossing the Burnham and Walsingham road, a narrow plantation on each side a broad vista leads from hence to the obelisk, a mile and a half; this plantation ought to be much broader, for you see the light through many parts of it; but it is only a sketch of what the late Earl designed, and not meant as complete. At the bottom of the hill, on which the obelisk stands, are the two porters' lodges. Rising with the hill, you approach the obelisk, through a very fine plantation; and nothing can be attended with a better effect, than the vistas opening at once. There are eight. 1. To the South part of the house. 2. To Holkham church, on the top of a steep hill covered with wood; a most beautiful object. 3. To the town of Wells, a parcel of scattered houses appearing in the wood. 4. To the triumphal arch. 5. Stiffkey hills. The rest to distant plantations.

Vistas are by no means the taste of the present age; but such a genius as Lord Leicester, the founder of this Mansion, might be allowed to deviate from fashion, in favour of beauty and propriety. Nothing can be more regular than

that I often feel myself, as it were, flying from lath and plaster, brick and mortar, however

the front of a great house, the approach to it ought therefore, to partake of this regularity ; because straight cuts are out of fashion, it would be an absurdity to take a winding course to the house door, for the sake of catching objects aslant, and irregularly : such management is to the full in as false a taste, as regular cuts where the house is out of the question. For instance, those from the temple at Holkham, which, however, command exceedingly beautiful objects ; 1. Wells church. 2. Holkham staith. 3. The lake in the park, which is seen from hence through some spreading trees, in a most picturesque manner ; a planted hill, the sea. 4. Honcle-crodale.

The object most striking on the north side of the park, is the lake, which extends 1056 yards, in nearly a straight line, covering, as has been observed, about 20 acres, including a small island ; the shore is a bold one, covered with wood to a great height, and on the top stands the church. The stables, at the south-west extremity of it, are plain, neat and commodious. The pinery and hot-house are equal to most in England. The plantations, in general, are sketched with, it is said, unrivalled taste : in the number of acres many exceed them ; but they appear to various points of view, infinitely more considerable than they really are. At the north entrance into the park they show prodigiously grand ; you look full upon the house, with a very noble back ground of wood, the obelisk just above the centre, with an extent of plantation on each side. Nothing can be more beautiful than that from the church ; the house appears in the midst

skilfully arranged, or beautified; to soar above them into regions of nature and sensation. For which reason, though I hold it right, and part of my promise, to have this account of Holkham set down for you, I have a more sincere, I would have said a more *congenial*

of an amphitheatre of wood, the plantations rising one above another. Another point of view which has been recommended to a traveller's notice, is the vale on the east side of the park. The north plantation stretches away to the right, the south woods to the left, and joining in front, form an extent of plantation that has a noble effect.

The house was begun in 1734 by the Earl of Leicester, but, he dying in 1759, it was finished by the Countess Dowager of Leicester, in 1764, who expended more than 10,000*l.* upon it and the additional furniture. It is built with curious white brick, the centre and wings extending 345 feet in length and 180 in depth.

HOLKHAM CHURCH stands on a hill north of the town, one mile from the sea, and is a noted sea-mark, commanding an extensive prospect on the British ocean: it is dedicated to St. Withburga, and has a nave and two ailes with a chancel, all covered with lead. At the south-west corner of the south aile stands a strong four-square tower, embattled, having four bells, the lower part serves as a porch to the church: the north and south ailes extend on each side of the chancel, and serve as buttresses against storms from the sea. The east end of both these ailes were chapels, and are inclosed. The church was thoroughly repaired by the Countess Dowager of Leicester in 1767.

satisfaction in the following well-attested tradition.

Influenced, by a tender regard to indigent and widowed age, in the year 1755 the Countess Dowager of Leicester, who finished the building of this house, erected and endowed, and in 1763 further benefited, an alms-house in this parish for the maintenance of three men, and three women, to have sixpence a day each, one chaldron of coals each annually, and to have new cloaths once in two years; the objects of her bounty to be elected by the possessor of Holkham-House, out of some parish in which its estates are situated. The building and furnishing the six dwellings, and purchasing the rents and estates for the support and maintenance of the whole at her Ladyship's cost.*

I adopt the idea of Mr. Parkin, my friend, who considered a book which endeavoured

* In the spirit of his virtuous ancestor, Mr. Coke has enlarged, I understand, and multiplied bounties of this kind an hundred fold.

to eternize the memory of truly great and noble benefactors, to whom works of consummate excellence, and public acts of piety and charity, have deservedly given superior distinction in the age in which they lived—a

RECORD OF VIRTUE.

FROM FAKENHAM to WALSINGHAM more than one attractive object meets your view. Midway are the ruins,—I had almost said the repairs—of BASHAM-ABBEY, formerly a residence of the Colthorpes. ¶It is worthy the notice of the traveller, whatever be his character or profession; if an architect, the singularity of the edifice, with its double display of entrances—its ten connected chimnies—its massy pillars, and its almost impenetrable walls, would be attractive; if an antiquary, it holds out to him, in addition to the above, the embrickment, if so I may write, of different armorial bearings, even up to the chimney tops; if a moralist, he may contemplate in the dilapidated state of these edifices, the weakness of the utmost strength in the works of men's hands. Nor will any one, who has but the air of a

person anxious to see more, he bounded in his curiosity by the *outer* walls. Your immediate correspondent is an evidence of this: for while he was viewing, from the back of his horse, the relicts of this venerable pile, one of its present residents (Mrs. Dennis) happening to be passing through the back part of the courtyard with some children, sent her servant to inquire if the gentleman wanted any thing?—Only to take a passing survey of this extraordinary old hall, was the answer, which being carried to the mistress, the servant came a second time to beg the gentleman would alight; the steed was conveyed into the stable, and not to an empty rack—Mrs. Dennis received your friend as if he had been hers: went over the habitable parts of the house—pointed to the fretted roofs, the massy walls, storying them as we past, and concluded with a courteous offer of refreshment, and declared what I had called a trouble had been a pleasure, with so much real urbanity, that I dare to ensure you as liberal a welcome as I have myself received; and I am certain you will deem this a sufficient

encouragement to stop your horse at the gate of Basham-abbey.—I feel persuaded, at the same time, you will suffer this instance of courtesy to go amongst others I have reported to you, to dislodge from the minds of your friends, an idea, which I know prevails on the Continent, of a certain rough—not to say insolent—though, indeed, *brutal* is the foreign word—haughtiness, that, literally, shuts the gate of good manners, in the very face of an un-recommended stranger. The real fact is, my dear friend, both in this, and many other countries, that strangers shut it against themselves. A traveller, bringing out with him such an idea, throws over his *own* manners a kind of suspicion which is enough, not only to realize, but to justify it. The urbanities of society are intimately connected with each other, and many of those most necessary, as well in the long and intricate journey of life, as in the excursions of pleasure, of learning, or of curiosity, which form no inconsiderable part of it, depend, in no slight degree, on *ourselves*. If our advances be frigid and suspicious, so will be our recep-

tion; and if they be conciliatory, they will generally excite a correspondent demeanour; and not seldom make courtesy, at least, a *guest* in the mind where it may not be an *inmate*.

But the almost expressed word *repairs*, in the early part of the above account of Basham-Abbey, has not been used without a stronger reason than what at first meets the eye. Supposing, and the supposition is founded, any of the original inmates or owners of the mansion to have been amongst the proud old English Barons, who held the humble and the poor in tyrannic vassalage; or, that holy hypocrisy profaned the devotional parts of the building, may we not consider the wealthy farm-yard which now employs the honest labourer, and carries health, competence and content to his cottage in these milder times—the chapel, which was once deformed by the imposing despotism of monkish superstition, now converted into commodious stabling for the generous steeds, and into granaries for private bounty and for public service,—the enormous rooms of monastic carousal, and swinish indolence turned into a comfortable

kitchen, where Prudence is the handmaid of Plenty, and into the decent keeping-room, where children, instead of being perverted in their opinions, shackled in their faith, and warpt in their understanding, are nurtured and instructed, may we not, I say, consider all these somewhat in the way of repairs or changes for the better?

Parkin, in his continuation of Blomfield, tells us, that Sir W. Farmer built here (at E. B.) a very large and stately mansion-house, or hall of brick, in the reign of the 8th Henry, now very much decayed and ruinous. Over the great Gate-house, leading into the Court-yard on the outside, are arms of the kings of France and England, quarterly, supported by a lion and a griffin, the arms of Henry, and on the right side are those of Farmer. Below these are two wild men or giants in two niches, one on each side of the gate, as janitors, armed with clubs, Over the door of the porch, leading into the hall, are the arms of France and England, with a griffin and greyhound supporters, Henry the VIIth's arms, and Farmer impaling. And in a low window in the hall, is this date 1538, in

which year, it is probable, the house was built.

The estate now belongs to Sir Edward Astley, of Melton Constable,* which as I am informed, has claims on your attention.

* This seat was built by Sir Jacob Astley, about the year 1680, and within a few years has been much ornamented and improved; particularly the west front, but not being a very modern building, is still rather in the stile of a neat habitable house than elegant; the chapel, the grand stair-case, the ceilings, and many of the rooms are highly finished. The park contains between six and seven hundred acres, is four miles in circumference, has lately been judiciously ornamented and the great canal made with uncommon difficulty and much judgment; which, when properly united with wood, will have a fine effect.

The country round Melton gradually rises for some miles to the house, from the top of which there is an extensive prospect to the east, south and west; there is a stair-case and door to the roof, which is of lead, and flat.

This lordship was granted by the Conqueror to William de Beaufoe, bishop of Thetford, to be held of him as a lay-fee, and in his own right, (with many other) being his lord chancellor, &c. and Roger de Lyons held it of the bishop, with Anschetel the provost.

From this Anschetel the provost, descended the family of de Melton, who according to the Norman custom assumed that name from their lordship, and sometimes wrote them-

selves de Constable, from the office and place that they held under the bishops of Norwich, by whom they had been enfeoffed of it.

The office of constable related as well to affairs of peace as to military affairs. The Conqueror seems first to have appointed this office: his grand constable or marshal, was stiled *Princeps Militiæ Domus Regis* and was hereditary, of whose dignity and authority our statutes and histories afford many proofs, and many lordships were held under the king by virtue of it, and the same was in this family, the office appearing to be hereditary.

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LETTER XIX.

WALSINGHAM, August 30, 1798.

AND now, my dear Baron, the country begins to lift itself into superior beauty. Nature, who had been timid and retired, comes suddenly forth, and asserts herself. The utmost which she could do upon a flat, assisted by art, has been exhibited at the seat of the Walpoles, and in the modest scenery that cheered your way to that august mansion. But the smallest cottage in the deep vallies, or on the ambitious mountains, where the lands rise and fall in solemn and sublime diversity, must ever be preferred by a pictorial traveller, to the most princely structures, and magnificent woods on a level surface.

Indeed, you are now leaving behind all the

flats in this direction of Norfolk, and I must admit the opinion of an observer upon it, as to the injustice with which it has been described by many of its hasty historians. Most parts, except the marsh and fen lands, are marked with rising grounds, which, though they do not ascend, with the almost presumptuous daring of sky-top'd Switzerland, carry your eye over a rich prospect, frequently of twenty, and sometimes thirty miles.

You will perceive a bold variety mark your path, and elevate your view, from the time you gain the steep ascent that begins its rise from the vale at the foot of Basham-abbey—a bold variety of *ground*, indeed, where nature grows adventurous; where she swells the hills more proudly than she is wont in her Norfolk domain, and sinks more abrupt and more profoundly into her glens. Yet, in this particular spot she discovers the nakedness of her land, in *one* respect, more than in some of the most undecorated, uncheary, and even in the wildest parts of her British possessions.

You will be attracted for a moment by the

summits unobstructedly rising before you; you will be refreshed by verdure that invites the foot and invigorates the eye—but, alas! where is now the wood, the thicket, the hedge-row? where are even the shrubs? Oh, beauteous Nature, prodigal as thou art of all these, in thy spring, thy summer, thy autumnal charms, why hast thou withdrawn them from WAL-SINGHAM?

The question will be answered in no common way: and I must, on this occasion, be the medium of Nature's reply. You will hear on the road, my friend, and, indeed, from the utmost verge of the country, were you even *there* to begin your inquiries, of a strange, distraught being, who turns night into day, day into night—who goes to bed when all the rational part of the world get up, and who rises when they retire to rest.—You will be told, that in the œconomy of his household he is no way absurdly profuse; yet, that he has suffered, and therefore encouraged, for twice ten years, a pack of vagabonds in his parish, to cut down, burn, and sell the timber, which were of his

father's, and his own planting, that he has allowed this felonious enormity to grow from bad to worse—from breaking up hedges, and lopping branches, to the exterminating whole nurseries and plantations, of no less value than ornament to his estate; and, indeed, to the picturesque beauty of the country—that when any of these midnight robbers—who ought, at least, to incur the penalty of a law in our country, called the Black Act—come in view of our midnight wanderer—for at the noon of night, you will be told, commence his perambulations—he only says, mildly, “take care how you get down that tree, or you may hurt yourself.”

In addition to all this, you will hear it asserted, and very truly, that by these depredations, he has sustained a loss of *twenty thousand* pounds at *least*; that,—so daring have at length become the offenders,—strings of boys and girls have been seen, in the broad eye of day, to bend under the burthen of nursing plants of as tender an age, and smaller than themselves—while the parents of these children,

setting the odious example, have been laden with whole trees.

All this you will *inevitably* hear, Baron ; and you will, doubtless, conclude, either that the proprietor is, in effect, out of his mind, or that the indignant peasantry, having long groaned under his tyranny, or famished under his avarice, had formed themselves into a conspiracy against the despotism of the tyrant, and collected a phalanx so powerful as to make the loss even of the miser's gold secondary to his dread of proceeding against the banditti.—You will, perhaps, conclude, that some apprehension of personal outrage might be added to such an attack on property, and that a certain consciousness of deserving it, is the chief motive of thus inverting the order of nature, by venturing forth only when timid, or guilty things suppose themselves comparatively safe, and even then, “treading as if in fear they trod.”

The vegetable desolation which you will see around you, on entering the domain of this singular person, who is still living, might

possibly, under the impression of these first appearances, lead you to turn back, that you may escape the very air which such a wretch is permitted to breathe, or you might be tempted to pass rapidly through his village, were you not to learn—which you will from every Walsingham villager—that this grinder of the poor, this tyrant of the rich—this—but you shall judge of him by characteristical anecdotes,—for the truth of which—singular as they must appear to every foreigner—strange, even as they are to us in this *country of character*, I refer you not only to every inhabitant of Walsingham, but almost to every person in this part of Norfolk.

In my first walk of observation and inquiry, the following conversation passed between your correspondent and Mr. Jacobs, the landlord of a public house immediately fronting the garden walls of the above gentleman.

A handsome seat, my friend, this, and if I am to believe report, inhabited by a very extraordinary person?

“*Extraordinarily* good, Sir—for that matter, too good!”

That, I should conceive, to be more singular still. How is he too good?

"Why because he has made almost every chick and child of the parish good for nothing. And they use him just as if he was as bad as themselves, though he would not hurt a fly. Nay, for that matter, I can tell you what happened between him and a fly, in his own house. And if you'll step with me as far as those iron gates, I'll shew you the very room where it fell out."

We walked together to the place he mentioned—a stately railing, according to the ancient fashion, opening on a spacious lawn, at the end of which stands the abbey, whose architecture, as well as the broad moat that half encircles it, resembles such of the country houses of England, and the chateaus of Germany, as were erected about the beginning of the present, or towards the close of the last century. On each side of the piece of water is a kind of grove, equidistant, and somewhat formal, but in good keeping, with the fashion of the house: for in those days, as, I think I have before mentioned

to you, the vegetable scenery of this country, as well as its buildings, and, indeed, its inhabitants, consulted rather the grandeurs than the graces: an evidence of false taste, finely ridiculed by one of our favourite poets:

“ Grove nods at grove, each ally has its brother,
And half the platform just reflects the other.”

I really do not believe there are a dozen trees on the one side of this grovelet more or less than the other, and, certainly, not half the number of inches, either in the diameter or circumference of the grassplots, and foliage of the same *kind*, stand so exactly parallel that a quarter-master might shew them to his raw recruits as an example of soldier-like symmetry; not a branch nor arm, or scarcely a leaf but has its companion, and assisted by the equal motion of the breeze they seem to exchange the salute military.

But the space between the water and the wood, on either side, was at the time I surveyed them, filled with objects by no means formal; an innumerable quantity of poultry of all kinds were spreading themselves over the lawn, or

swimming in the moat; and I could not but express my surprize that the inhabitants of the court yard should be suffered to take their pastime in the garden.

“I suppose, Sir,” says Jacobs, “you are wondering to see so many ducks, geese, chickens, cocks, hens, &c. in the Squire’s garden; but if you had been here before sunrise, or if you should come later in the evening, there would be something worth looking at, for then the Squire gets them all about him by hundreds. He is not up yet, for I suppose it is not above five in the afternoon, in a couple of hours though he will begin to *think* about rising, but if he does not come down stairs till ten or twelve at night, which is often the case, not a fowl of them will roost till they see him.—The moment he leaves his room—that is it with the closed shutters—he opens that front door and gives his poultry their supper, though he does not get even his breakfast till midnight, and sometimes, two or three in the morning. Oh! ’twould do your heart good, to see the pigeons come from that dove-house

and light upon his hat, shoulders, hands, and arms! and the other creatures that are now straying about, run to him fit to break their necks; the pullets and chickens fly up to perch on him while they peck out of his hand or his basket. Then his pigs, his dogs, and other animals in the yard get *their* turn, for he goes out at that gate on the right, and gives them their breakfast, and all this, in Winter and Summer as sure as the day and night goes and comes."

"But you promised me the story of the fly, Mr. Jacobs."

"And I will be as good as my word, Sir. The affair fell out in that parlour to the left, when with some other townsman we were dining with the 'Squire, who has no more pride than one of his chickens, and as you shall hear presently, not more gall than his pigeons. As we were standing just before dinner came in, at that very window, we heard a humming over our heads, and looking up, saw a fly in a cob-web-trap, the spider just at the end of his line, balancing away just like one of the tumbling

men I have seen at our Walsingham Wake. He looked just like a little black ball of poison, and in another minute would have darted away, and got the poor fly in his clutches, if the 'Squire had not frightened him away with his white handkerchief—but only the air of it as he waved it about, in this fashion:—for though he made the web—ecod! and the weaver too,—shake and shiver as if they were both in an ague fit, he did not break a single thread of the fellow's work; however, it got the fly out of her hobble, for down she dropt at the very first whisk upon the window seat, flat on her back and almost stunned. Almost all this time the dinner was standing by itself on the table, and there it might have stood for the 'Squire till now, if he had not settled the affair,—and how do you think he managed it?—as sure as you are alive, he took her up as soft as if she was his kin, then let her lay in his handkerchief as if she was on a fine white muslin bed with nice cotton sheets. We then went to table:—he used in those days to dine in Summer even before sunset,—sometimes so soon as three or four

o'clock,—and I think I never saw the 'Squire so merry,—for he is as nice a man, and as full of cleverness, as any in the hundred:—but in the midst of the fun, up he got and ran to the window, but was back in an instant with the handkerchief in his hand; 'as the bird is flown,' said he, 'I think I may venture to take the nest.' 'Squire, said I, the fly may thank heaven you were at the window! "I suppose, he answered, 'every thing that has life wishes to live as long as it can, friend Jacobs, and as so many animals die that we may live, it is the least we can do to save one or two when we can.'

"And are there any amongst you—any, who can do an injury, or even an injustice to this restorer of the fallen fly? No doubt, his benevolent disposition ascends from animals to man; from the poor reptile you have just mentioned as its object, to such of his fellow-creatures as are in distress," questioned the Gleaner.

"Distress, Sir," answered Jacobs, "why he never could bear to hear of it or to see it; and, as I told you, did not hurt that damn'd spider, though for my part, I wish'd his poison-

bag taken from his little pod belly, and cram'd down his own ugly throat:—I love an honest fellow, but down with a rogue wherever you meet him, say I.—'Tis a *sort* of years ago, to be sure, since we *largess'd**—for it was at harvest-tide, in that parlour, else I should not wonder if the rascal was see-sawing upon his line, or mending his nets, or squating in his corner, as sly as a bailiff, just when I left him, at this minute. But I dare say some imps, as black as young devils and as wicked, are there or thereabouts, for neither rogue nor honest personage will the 'Squire harm, not he; and that, Sir, makes me say, he is too good. O, it would make your blood freeze or else boil, but to *think* how he has been used for it!"

"So I have heard. You allude to the devastations committed in his woods and hedges, the theft and plunder of his timber."

"Woods and hedges! that is bad enough to be sure; for except the small fir-grove at the

* A harvest term in Norfolk.

head of yon high-land, and that stands only because it is in the hands of a tenant, who has a long lease of his farm; there's not a tree that is bigger than a may-pole, and but very few of *them* on the whole estate. Nay, the people have begun upon this wilderness, which I remember as thick and green again as you now see it: for that matter, they go into the abbey back yard, and carry away just what they like: for the devil a dog will he keep—as I would—to snap at their legs, or jump at their throats; and if a servant catches them in the fact and speaks to them, their only answer is, 'if the 'Squire comes to tell us himself, that we should not do as we like, why we will leave off.'

"And has this reply ever been reported to the 'Squire?"

"A hundred times, Sir; but what of that? He'll not come out if they were to tell him so a *thousand* times a hundred. Pray, Sir, at what inn are you?"

"The King's-head, I think, kept by a widow-woman."

"Close to the abbey yard: a good house,

and a good woman, and just lost a good husband."

"I perceive she is in mourning."

"When you get back, do but step into the 'Squire's back yard, three or four doors on the right from the widow's, and you will have cause to mourn, as you shall hear. The yard is a kind of grove. I remember it *sweet-some* to behold; it has a good deal of shade yet, but a *sort* more trees lie dead on the ground, than are to be seen alive in it; ay, and some of the finest timber in England. But you could never guess how they got into the 'Squire's back-yard, unless I were to tell you. Why, Sir, they were all brought there, at different times, either by the 'Squire's own tenants or servants when they were returning from plough, or passing in a waggon or cart.

"For what purpose, Mr. Jacobs?"

"To save them from being carried off, and sold by the vagabonds in Little and Great Walsingham, and, in short, all round the country, after they had hewn and hacked them down. I, myself, Sir, have help'd to draw

some of them to the abbey with my own *donky*, and have taken some of the hatchets and axes out of the thieves' hands, and carried them myself to the 'Squire?"

"And what said he upon that evidence?"

"Said he!" answered Jacobs, half grinding his teeth—"why he said to me just what he has often said to every servant in the abbey, and, indeed, to almost every honest man in the parish—there are some honest fellows in spite of him—'Not right, Mr. Jacobs,'—for he *musters* every body—the civilest gentleman you ever saw—'Not right, Mr. Jacobs, that the people should use their axes and hatchets to cut down my timber, but very wrong, Mr. Jacobs, that you should steal them. It is but committing the same fault a different way; yet one bad thing does not excuse another: so, pray, Mr. Jacobs, make all the haste you can to return what you have stolen.' I see, Sir, you look as if you did not believe me; and how the devil should you?—I do not think there have ever been such doings as there have at WALSINGHAM since the beginning of the world; at least,

since the planting of the first tree in Adam's garden : but the thing is as true as that those ducks are swimming in the moat."*

But what I have now told you is nothing to the shocking tricks played on his cattle, horses, and corn : I suppose you would think I *must* be fibbing were I to inform you that whoever has a mind to it goes into his stable, saddles, or harnesses a horse, and rides, or ploughs with him, bringing him home at night, or keeps him a week, or a fortnight together, without so much as a question being asked by the 'Squire ; and what is worse, they not only steal the wheat, barley, and other grain, from the field when it is sheaved, to save themselves the

* There are so many circumstances whereon to found disbelief in the account of this very amiable but singular man, that although I can, with the most scrupulous veracity, declare with Mr. SOUTHEY in his entertaining, interesting, and elegant " Letters in Spain and Portugal," that " I have never in the slightest instance enlivened the narrative, by deviating from plain truth." I feel it necessary to repeat, now my correspondence is preparing for the public, that I have represented things, as they *are to be seen and heard* by any man in England who chooses to make inquiry.

trouble of cutting it, but they are wicked enough to cut off the corn-ears, by whole acres before they are half ripe."

"Good God! what wantonness!" (exclaimed I,) "why this is worse than all the rest."

"Not the worst neither, Sir," (rejoined Jacobs,) "there is a tenant of his, an innholder, and I hope you will not think I am going to tell a lie of him because he is a brother publican, but he has not paid rent these nine or ten years, and the 'Squire lets him go on just the same as I do, who am as sure as quarter-day; but what will you say when I tell you that the 'Squire sent his servant to say he might lessen the debt by supplying the abbey family with beer, but for all that the second time it was sent in, a bill went with a letter, "to hope the 'Squire would not be offended, but times were so hard he could not afford to trust, unless one barrel was paid for when another should be brought."

"Can that be possible?"

"Ay, and worse yet, for you may see little

boys and girls steal the pease from the very troughs, when they cannot carry off the pigs, for which the 'Squire has left off hog-fattening, for fear of their being starved to death, and is now obliged to buy his own bacon; though, to be sure, there are a few old swine in the yard, because the 'Squire says they may as well stay where they are till they're called for: he has always something droll and merry to say upon it, let people do what they will: as you must needs think when you hear another of his answers about cutting down his trees.—“The estate was barren, friend, when I came to it, and is likely to be barren again.”

During the latter part of this discourse, Mrs. Jacobs came from the house to tell her husband he was wanted, and we soon parted. I returned to the inn, under sensation and impression scarce to be described, still wishing to discredit, at least, that part of the evidence which was brought against the common gratitude of the neighbourhood; but whatever I heard or saw afterwards—and from all ranks of people, in the progress of several days' sojourn

at Walsingham, and in various walks and rides of observation—not only confirmed the details which Jacobs had given, but added many aggravating circumstances. In particular the anecdote of a tenant, who having omitted to pay any thing for the rent of a considerable farm, came at last to the abbey with a complaint to the 'Squire, that so far from thinking he could settle arrears he must give up his farm, his family being so large he could not live on it himself. "Poor Tom!" (said the 'Squire,) "that is hard, indeed; then we must go some *other* way to work." "I do not know how that can be, Sir," said the farmer—"seeing that I have neither horses, carts, cows, nor sheep—having sold them all—there's nothing but the land left, and that you may have back—and here and there, mayhap, a half-starved hen or turkey, and they may go with it." "My poor, poor Tom! worse and worse," (quoth the Squire,) "nevertheless, go home to your family, and we will see what can be done; if *you* have no carts or horses *I* have, and I believe the best way to make you pay me is now to help you to do it."

With these assurances, he was prevailed upon to continue in the farm, and from that time to that day twelve-month his landlord shared with him the use, not only of the promised articles, as to cattle and stock, but every instrument of husbandry—his own servant lent to plough, to sow, and to reap, previously buying for him the very seed to put in the ground, and, in short, *farmed for the farmer*. An expression, alas! for human nature, but too literal. It is lamentably true, that he was not farming for himself; for, I find, poor Tom succeeded as ill as before, at least the profits of this eleemosynary labour much oftener found its way into the pocket of my hostess at the King's-head, and other alehouses in the neighbourhood, than into that of the 'Squire at the Abbey.

In course of various conversations, however, I found that Mr. ***** had once been moved gently to remonstrate against axe and hatchet-men; and that was when a banditti of them were about to cut down a favourite, and, indeed, famous chesnut-tree; then it was, he ventured to signify—but still, by a medium—

"that he could wish they would desist." In answer to which they repeated what they had often said before, "if the 'Squire comes and says so to us himself, we will." The servant carried the answer, the master said nothing more, and the tree was cut down.

My mind had been filling as well with the strange things I had heard from Jacobs as with the confirming report of others I had encountered on the way, and I literally "went forth into the fields at even-tide to meditate." But what did those fields present, as I wandered about them, without any settled direction? I followed a ruthless guide—even the exterminating axe! Unexpectedly the Sun broke out intensely hot, and I absolutely panted for the shade. I observed some cattle in the same pursuit. A clump of trees would have been a real comfort to man, and beast. Even the patient cows, with their tails twisted, mouths open, and at their full unwieldy run, were hunting over the mead, for a green covert; while a bull, labouring with the heat, and tortured by the flies, was tearing up the earth for what none of us could find.

I bent my way again towards Walsingham, and took refuge in the first cottage I found at the outskirts of the village. The peasants were at their tea, the rosy children, equally defying the powers of sun or shade, were laden with their brown-bread supper—a huge, health-looking slice. Perhaps I envied; I certainly blessed both them and their meal: I blessed their hut, and, as usual, was soon a part of the humble household. The parents of the family ratified every former account respecting the desolation of the woods, and the indifference of the proprietor as to what became of them. The mother of the family allowed, “it was very strange the Squire should suffer such doings,” and the father loudly reprobated the wickedness of those “who could take advantage of such an easy gentleman’s temper.” I must remark, nevertheless, I have since heard that both mother and father, and also a married son, at a place called Snoring, were three of the most active and determined loppers and choppers the poor woodlands had to complain of.

On leaving the cot, I fell into some profound ruminations respecting the vegetable ruins I had been surveying. The very sight of them was to me a serious affliction. You know, Baron, how much I luxuriate in verdure, and that I may be said, without any strain on the metaphor, to *see feelingly* the charms of nature; that my heart rejoices to observe a flourishing plantation, with as sincere, and, perhaps, a more pure delight than its possessor. Knowing this, you will judge of what I experienced from a view of a whole dismantled estate, which, indeed, was left little more than the green earth.

To the eye of fancy, the very genius of the woods seemed to be seated on a trunk of one of the many THOUSAND, (the word is used in a *literal* sense,) many THOUSAND majestic trees which were wont to grace and enrich the domain. The licensed, yet merciless robbers have scarcely left a shade for the diminutive wren, much less a shelter for the way-farer even from a passing shower. They have not only hewn down, and cast into the fire, whole thriving nurseries of oak and fir, planted by Mr. ***

*****'s own hand, and trees of nobler growth, but have carried their felonious depredations even to the hedge-rows, which they have stripped of every tree that answered to a poor man, even the *trouble* of cutting down. In a word, the whole estate, a circuit of several miles, exhibits, in a natural sense, a mutilated, and mangled prospect, once pleasing and profitable; and, in a moral sense, a yet more melancholy view, of the depravity, the ingratitude, and the wantonness of men, when they have not the fear of the iron hand of the law before their eyes.

I returned to my inn with the true step of profound reflection,—a step which our poets, treading in the track of each other, have justly called “solemn and slow.” A character altogether new in an old world, and even in a part of it abounding with original beings of almost every possible kind, had displayed itself to my view. I knew my mind to be free from the deep-rooted incredulity of those stay-at-home deciders of what is seen abroad, and who think every thing must be false that *seems* so, par-

ticularly if it is incomprehensible to them; and I had so often attested the wonderful diversity of nature in all her operations—and, perhaps, more than any other in the mind of man—that I could not easily be staggered in my faith. But I had unexpectedly met, in an obscure nook of the island, a variety of circumstances which I feel I should *myself* have doubted, had they been given to me on the credit of any single reporter, however respectable. Here was at once a complete indifference, not to say triumph, over what every other being in civilized society, when not absorbed in grief, has always considered as sacred—the *value, or the beauty of their property*. I had before heard of men who had prosecuted a poor man to the utmost rigour of our law, for breaking a hedge, or cutting down a twig, but it had never come within my knowledge or belief, that a gentleman, in the possession of a well-wooded domain, and of sound understanding, could allow almost every tree it had once to boast to be deliberately cut down, and carried away: and *that* without so much as making an inquiry after the

offenders, or entering into any remonstrance as to their past, or present, or future depredations.

Yet I felt an earnest desire to become personally acquainted with so extraordinary a man, and from repeated assurances collected in the course of the following day, respecting the politeness and urbanity with which he received strangers, I wrote to entreat the favour of an interview, and received an answer about eleven o'clock the same evening by his servant, who said his master was going to get up, and would be glad to receive me at twelve.

I cannot describe to you the unusual sensation on my entering his abbey. It was about a quarter past twelve o'clock.—From the historians of the place, and from the country reporters, I seemed to be familiar with him—the poor fly, and the story of farmer Tom were still in my heart, yet it beat faster, and somewhat more anxiously than usual as I found myself in his room of receiving company—I stood amidst a groupe of old family pictures. Wines of different sorts were on the table, and two glasses and chairs set ready,

Wax candles were lighted by a servant, who informed me "the *Squire* would be down stairs presently—in the mean time, Sir," said he, "there are books and maps, and the last newspaper to amuse you." I turned over some of these, rather mechanically than with consciousness; for the palpitation continued, and assisted by the lateness of the hour, the long abbey yard I had passed, the sight of the rescued timber Jacobs spoke of, and which a lantern I was obliged to use shewed me—and the antique, though hospitable air of every thing around, produced a sort of gothic sensation, and might have told extremely well in one of the magical romances of the day. Had I been keeping an assignation with one of the very ghosts with which a novelist might haunt this abbey I could not have been more awfully situated; and to give a finish to my feelings, the bearded ancestors of the family seemed to look frowningly at me from their canyas.

I believe we all make fancy drawings of the persons we have long admired, wondered at, or wished to see, especially when any singular

qualities associate with our ideas of them: and as, for the most part we give features and figures correspondent to what we have heard or read, of their manners or minds, we are, probably, in general, more correct than faulty in these portraiture of the imagination. My anticipated lineaments and dimensions of this gentleman, however, formed a complete exception to the rule, for they failed in every particular. I had fashioned him muscular, and corpulent, with a projected brow, and somewhat of a misanthropic cast of countenance, attributing his seclusion and supineness partly to having unfitted himself for exercise, and his indifference to the public injuries he had sustained, to a secret resentment against those who had wronged him, although he forbore to complain, or to punish.

The reverse of this picture was soon made manifest, for the original appeared even while I was finishing his copy. Mr. ***** is between seventy and eighty years of age, yet perfectly upright, small, but elegantly formed, and of the most engaging countenance. His manners are prepossessing, his address easy,

and he has nothing that bespeaks the old school but his dress, which gave me back the exact image of the English gentleman of the last age. He was habited in a fawn-coloured suit of cloaths, edged with gold, which, however, from the effect of time had taken the cast of silver, a binding of the same ornamented his knees, a deep chitterlin of rich lace, somewhat yellowed by age, graced his bosom, and the deep slash sleeves, and high-wrought, richly embossed button of good old days, decorated the sleeves of his coat. His shoes were curved at the toe, and their buckles were such as are now worn by our old gentlemen *upon the stage*, and, indeed, by some young gentlemen at present *off the stage*, for the fashion of times past are, in this respect, come round again. His conversation is animated, his remarks judicious, his reading extensive, and his acquaintance with modern, as well as ancient literature by no means inconsiderable. Over the whole of his communications presides a certain hospitable, and yet unassuming courtesy, that captivates while it instructs. Soon after one in the morning the

tea equipage was brought, which served for *his* breakfast, and the beverage I *should* have taken about seven the preceding evening, had I not reserved myself for all that might happen on an occasion which promised what it performed, —something very extraordinary. The subjects we discussed were various. We warmed as we proceeded. Social topics are interesting. I caught from my host the wisdom of the past, and endeavoured to remunerate him by describing scenes of the present; the middle, and the closing parts of the century were thus divided between us. In this kindling progress I soon forgot that I had passed the hour at which I usually had been asleep, and that Mr. ***** had but lately risen.

At length preparations were made for supper, and while the table was serving, he took upon himself the trouble to shew me every part of the abbey, giving me as we passed along its ancient history, in the best and clearest language, and pointing out to me the most correct sources of farther information respecting other antiquities of Walsingham.

The servant announced the repast. It was his master's dinner, and, of course, my supper. The clock struck the fourth hour of the morning soon after we were seated. There was a little of every thing, and that little of the best, and it may be truly said "he gaily pressed and smiled." Thankless and sullen must have been the guest, that would not have been cheered. It was not till after the Sun had put our candles to the blush, and quenched their miserable morsels of artificial light in his living beams, that I could prevail upon myself to bid him good morning, or, let me proudly say, that he would suffer me to say farewell.

On the following night I repeated my visit, and renewed my pleasure. A third, and a fourth invitation succeeded, and I could not but accept them. In these I had opportunity to see him in every point of view that bespoke the scholar, and the gentleman. But not a sentence nor a circumstance at any time came forth that denoted the wonderful things—the almost phænomena—that were reported of him without-doors. I was more than once tempted to lead

the subject that way, but not perceiving him disposed to follow, it would have been rudeness to persist, and his silence struck me as a new trait in a new character,

LETTER XX.

WALSINGHAM, Sept. 4, 1798.

YET the force of the facts was by no means diminished by his silence; every hour of my sojourn here has increased their energy. Persons of every character had something to add to the strength of former accounts. When, however, I heard that the amiable man under consideration had paid five hundred pounds as the forfeit of refusal to act as sheriff for the county, rather than engage in a situation that might make him an eye-witness, if not an accessory, in the punishment of crimes even to death; and that while he was in commission of the peace, as a magistrate, many instances are on record wherein there has been the most severe conflict betwixt his sense

of justice, and his feeling of compassion : when, moreover, I had myself watched his conduct to the domestic animals that surrounded him, and, if you will permit me so to express myself, observed *their* conduct to him : when I saw every living thing under his protection approach towards, instead of receding from him—while I was myself unseen, and unsuspected—and when I heard his servants speak of him with uniform gratitude and respect, and the peasants of the country declare, like his tenant Jacobs, that he was “too good,”—with very few exceptions to this report—and those bearing the marks of malignity and disappointment, rather than of truth—when I considered all this, I no longer laboured to discover that the motive for his thus seeming to disregard what men in general are so tenacious of, must originate in a principle of virtue, even while it sanctions a vice. The cause is honourable to his nature, though the effect is injurious to society. I scarcely know how to express myself, dear Baron : the circumstance is new ; and methinks there should be a new form of words, or, at

least, a better arranger of old ones than your correspondent to express it, without incurring the censure of a paradox. It is, notwithstanding, clear to my mind, however I may have embarrassed the language, that his nature can endure neither to be principal nor abettor in giving pain or sufferance, even to those whom his good sense must inform him abundantly deserve it; and that were he once to appear, in the character of a prosecutor, and pursue a detected culprit to the extremity of the law, his own private misery would far exceed his sense of the service he would thereby do to the public.

I by no means presume to offer this as a general justification of such kind of lenity. I am aware it would confuse and disorder the community beyond all reparation. I only suggest it in defence of a mind constructed with peculiar softness, and from a wish to represent him to a number of his friends who I know, love and honour him, yet who seem to want a vindication,—an explanation—of the only part of a character that stands in need of it.

Having now finished my sketch of the most prominent object in Walsingham,—and one which would certainly be considered as deserving to stand very forward on the canvas in any part of the world—I can conscientiously pass on to other matters deserving your attention.

In a former letter, you remember, I promised you more particulars of our august dame of WALSINGHAM; of whom, wishing to pay her all possible homage, I have been sedulous to collect whatever has been said to her honour that merits notice, though not the hundredth tythe of the marvellous circumstances which tradition has told. For in our days of darkness and superstition, when priests and monks ruled not only the consciences but the purses of the English Laity, “they who had not made a pilgrimage and an offering at the shrine of the blessed Virgin of this place were looked upon as impious and irreligious.”

Now for it then!

So great was the fame of this idol or image of the Lady of Walsingham, that foreigners of all nations came on a pilgrimage to her,

insomuch that the number of her devotees and worshippers, seemed to equal those of the Lady of Loretto in Italy; and what my friend will deem much better, the town of Little Walsingham owed its chief support and maintenance to the devotional offerings which were paid to this great personage. Of the royal visitors, our third Henry appears to have done homage to her, March 24, in the 26th year of his reign; his precept enjoining all who held in *capite*, to meet him on the octaves of Easter, at Winchester, on an expedition into Gascoign, being dated here as above; and what expedition could have the hope to prosper, unless her Ladyship was disposed to assist the cause?

Next in the princely procession was the first EDWARD; who was here on January the 8th, in his 9th year, as appeared by the date of a patent for the repair of London-bridge; and again, in his 25th year, on the Purification of the Virgin; and his successor was also here, October the 6th, in his 9th year.

In the 35th of Edward II. John de Montfort, duke of Bretagne in France, came and

had the king's *liberate* to the treasurer and chamberlains of the Exchequer, to deliver £.9 for the expences of his journey to Walsingham and back to London: and in the said year, the duke of Anjou had licence to visit the shrine of St. Thomas à Becket of Canterbury.

David Bruce, king of Scotland, had in the 38th year of the said king, a protection to come to Walsingham with thirty horse; and his queen Margaret, made a vow to visit also St. Thomas of Canterbury.

Moreover, ISABEL, countess of Warwick, in 1439, bequeathed her tablet with the image of our Lady, to the church of Walsingham; also to the Lady there, her gown of alyz cloth of gold, with wide sleeves, and a tabernacle of silver like in the timbre to that of our Lady of Caversham.

HENRY the VII mentions in his will, that he had ordered an image of silver, and gilt, to be made and offered up and set before the Lady of Walsingham: and also a like image for St. Thomas of Canterbury.

The notorious HARRY the VIII, in his 2d

year, soon after Christmas, rode here; and in the said year, May 14, as appears in a MS. of payments, by the keeper of the privy seal, 6s. 8d. were then paid to Mrs. Garneys, for the king's offering to her, and signed by the king's hand at Walsingham!

Queen CATHERINE his wife, during the king's absence in France, in his 5th year, came and returned thanks to the Lady, for the great victory over the Scots, at Floddonfield, September 9, 1513.

Nay, Spelman says, that when he was a youth, it was commonly reported, that Henry the VIII walked barefoot from the town of Basham to the chapel of the Lady, and there presented her with a necklace of very great value; "with a view, perhaps," says Spelman, "to moderate the resentment of the Virgin when he thought fit," as he did soon after, "to banish her from her monastery and to pull it down:" for *he was so sensible of her wonderful goodness, how ready she was to remember small favours, and godlike to forget great injuries, that on his death-bed he bequeathed his soul to*

her : but whether his executors disposed of it strictly according to his will and testament, is not a point altogether certain, because, I believe, they fulfilled it in no other article. You are sufficiently conversant with the history of that Monarch to set a due value on the Royal legacy : at any rate, you will allow it wanted a little *purification*, and was therefore very properly bequeathed to a Saint.

Queen CATHERINE in *her* will, desires that five hundred masses should be said for *her* soul, and that a person should make a pilgrimage to our Lady at Walsingham, and distribute two hundred nobles in charity upon the road. The amiable though outraged mind of Catherine, gives every hope, that without any such homage to the image, her charitable spirit would be acceptable and ascend to the veritable God, to whose mercy we may trust even the ill-assorted soul of her lord the king, more safely than to a myriad of idols.

So superstitious, so weak and credulous were the commonalty, that they believed—as they were then imposed upon and taught—the Galaxy,

or, what is called in the sky, the Milky-Way, was appointed by Providence to point out the particular place and residence of *this* Virgin, beyond all other places, and was thereupon, generally, in that age, called Walsingham-Way; and I have heard old people in this county so distinguish it.

Among the innumerable miracles that were ascribed to her, accept what follows:—On the north side, at which you enter the close of the priory, was a very low and narrow wicker-door, through which it was difficult for any one to pass on foot, being, as an old MS. says, “Not past an elne hye, and three quarters in bredth.” And a certain Norfolk knight, Sir Ralph Boutetourt, armed cap-a-pee and on horseback, being pursued by a cruel enemy and in the utmost danger of being taken, made full speed for this gate, and invoking the Lady for his deliverance, he immediately found himself and his horse within the close and sanctuary of the priory in a safe asylum, and so “*fooled his enemy.*” This is said to have happened in the year 1314. A memorial of it was engraven

on a plate of copper, with the effigies of the knight, his horse, &c. nailed on the gate of the priory, and was read by Erasmus; who observes, that there was preserved one joint of a finger of St. Peter, as large as that of the Colossus at Rhodes!

But, alas! this so famous image of the Lady, was in the 30th of *Henry the VIII* brought by the Lord High Chamberlain—Cromwell, to Chelsea by London, and there publicly burnt! No doubt she was first beheaded. Henry, you remember, was quite in the habit of decapitating his idols;—but all for conscience' sake—as, no doubt, was the motive of this noble act. You observe, that in the second year of his reign, he went *barefoot* from Basham to Walsingham, with an offering of the rich necklace, then threw the sacred image into the fire. I cannot find any account of what became of the necklace. The Lord High Chamberlain of the day, —Thomas Cromwell, carried the image from this town to Chelsea, a village in the neighbourhood of London, and saw it, by the royal order, committed to the flames; and if you choose,

you may believe that the pious Monarch, deeming the necklace polluted by the wearer, disdained to receive it back, so directed that it should be consumed with the image.

The shrine of the Virgin is splendidly described by Erasmus who had been on the spot. The church is beautiful, but the Virgin dwells not in it; out of veneration and respect, that honour is granted to her son. She has, however, so contrived as to be on the right hand of her son; but neither in *that* doth she live, the building being not yet finished, says Erasmus. In this church there is a small chapel of wood, into which the pilgrims were admitted on each side at a narrow door; there was but little or no light in it, but what proceeded from wax tapers, yielding a most pleasant and odoriferous smell; but, "if you look in, you will say it is a seat of the Gods, so bright and shining it is all over, with jewels, gold and silver." Blomfield observes, that a Canon resident always attended at the altar, to receive and *take care of* the offerings. The Lady was patroness both of the abbey and priory.

It appears, likewise, that the chief Prior had the second-best of every animal in the parish, and if there was but one,—why he had that.

I am just come from inspecting the remains of the building of the abbey. They consist of a large portal or gate-house at the west entrance; the east window of the chapel is a richly ornamented arch, upwards of sixty feet high, built in the reign of Henry the VII, the old one being pulled down; the refectory, or eating-house, entire, seventy-eight feet long, and twenty-seven broad; the walls twenty-six feet and a half high—the measures taken within side. There are a good west window and stone pulpit in it; the whole building is in good preservation, twelve columns with gothic arches, and, part of the old cloisters, evidently built before the last chapel.

Buck, in a plate published in 1738, and dedicated to the present proprietor, has taken away the roof in order to make it appear in the print more picturesque.

The length of the cloister, which was square, was fifty-four paces. The length of

the chapter-house twenty paces, the breadth ten: the old abbey wall, was near a mile in circuit, and is yet entire in many parts; also a stone bath, with steps descending into it, and two uncovered wells, called "the wishing wells." Of the virtue of the last, great things are said; as indeed, might be well expected, when the devotees to the Lady of Walsingham were taught to believe, that whomsoever was permitted to drink of these waters, might obtain their wishes "*sans fee*."

Many of the wonders of these miraculous wells might be recorded for you, but the comments of the Sage who told them to me, —Mr. *****'s old Gardener—is, I hope a curiosity in store for you. Though half deaf and not a little lame, he has good promise of yet longer existence, and each domestic of Walsingham abbey being a tenant *at will*, and I dare anticipate, will, if survivor, have more even than a master's life-interest in the estate: you will, therefore, probably, see as curious a Gardener of as curious a garden, as you can ever expect to meet in this world of curiosities.

and if, on your arrival, the poor fellow should no longer be a moveable, you will find him a fixture. In the meantime, I will not withhold from you a little discourse that passed between us at the wells. "If you are for a wish, Sir, now is your time: and they *do* say, that you may have just what you will; though, for my part, I have been wishing here these thirty years, and have not got my wish yet."

"That is hard indeed, Mr. Gardener, seeing that you live at the fountain-head."

"Very good for bad eyes, I believe, master, but not much in them to help us out of bad luck: though a pair of lasses who came a-wishing here last Summer, and dipt their pretty faces into them, were here again in the beginning of this season, and told me that both had got what they wanted; and whether the well-water had any thing to do with it or not, so as they had their wishes, you know, Sir, it was the same thing, 'specially as they gave me a shilling a piece, because they said, funnily enough, methought, I had help'd them to their wants and wishes."

"Still you could not succeed for yourself, my poor fellow. But that is not singular. The greatest prophets, fortune-tellers and magicians; who have predicted such mighty matters for others, can seldom do more than keep themselves from starving. Even a witch,* you must have heard, hardly ever got enough to buy her a new broomstick, after she had worn out the old one to the stumps."

"But, perhaps, you do not believe in the power of witches any more than you do in your wishing wells."

"Under favour, Sir, I do not."

"Is it fair to inquire into any of your own wishes, Mr. Gardener?"

"Why sometimes I wish, Sir, that I could

* "A witch," says the late ingenious Mr. Grose, in his short account of popular superstitions, "is almost universally a poor decrepit superannuated woman; yet we do not find that in consequence of her wicked compact, she enjoys much of the good things of this world, but still continues in abject penury." This, however, is a subject I shall resume when I take you into the *witching* parts of England.

get the buzzing out of this ear, that I might not be so deaf, and I grow worse every year; then again, I have wished I could bring this hip about, and yet I am lamer than ever; and lastly, which is worse than all, I have wished a hundred times, the 'Squire would let this yard and wilderness be kept in the trim it used to be, and that he would get somebody to trim the thieves that rob him of all they can lay hold of, but no such good luck. Why, as sure as you are alive, Sir, they come now into the yard and garden in broad day, knowing master is safe in bed, and carry off what comes to hand, without taking any more notice of me than if I was a dead thing: and a dead thing I don't doubt but they would soon make of me, if I was to say much to them.—A pure good man—a right good master—and won't harm a worm:—Pity, an't it, Sir, he should let them go on thus. Well, it's no use to talk to him; he's fast a-sleep, I suppose now, and God bless him!—its some comfort though, there is little or nothing left for the rogues to take, without they begin upon the garden trees here, which,

I dare say, they will, when they have cleared the abbey-yard of the fell'd and standing timber now in it.

That I might not seem to throw myself out of the way of fortune, I took a draught of the water out of the wishing tumbler, which the good gardener kept in a little nook of the wall, and *wish'd*—that master and servant might have health and happiness till I saw them again.

The town of WALSINGHAM has a good market, stands on the banks of a nameless river which runs into the sea below STIFKEY, at about six or seven miles' distance, and one of its most delightful rides, is to the last-named village. This recommendation goes strengthened to you by various travellers, particularly Arthur Young, who says, what I found delightfully true, "that the ride from WARHAM by STIFKEY, is through a most picturesque country; the road runs on the brow of the hill looking down on STIFKEY vale. The vale, which is composed of meadows of the finest verdure, winds in a very beautiful manner from out of a thicket of woody

inclosures, and retires behind a projecting hill; an humble stream glides through it, and adds a cheerfulness, which water can so well confer."

The hills ascend boldly before you, and though they are bare of wood, that defect is compensated by the thick inclosures, in which the village is scattered, forming with its church in a dip of the hill, and that of Blakeney above it, in a prouder situation, a complete picture.

The hall, or manor-house, now occupied at present by Mrs. Buck, the tenant of the farm, is the stately ruin of a large and noble structure, built by Sir Nicholas Bacon, in the reign of queen Elizabeth; whose arms and date, 1604, are on the gate-way. The house is situated in the bottom of a deep and gloomy vale, surrounded with the high and steep hills just mentioned; a languid stream runs close by its south front, environed with a few tall trees, which add not a little to the pensive appearance of the whole scene.

The west front, with two embrasured towers, is more uniform than most houses of the same age. The gate-way introduced you to a spaci-

ous area, of which the main building formed the west and north, and the gardens and offices, with high walls, the east side.

The church, dedicated to St. John the Baptist, stands on the higher ground, a little north of the hall, as does the parsonage, a neat and commodious dwelling, now occupied by the rector. The present Marquis Townshend resided here some time, after his return from Ireland, where, as has been already noted, he had presided as Lord Lieutenant, with the greatest reputation and dignity for many years.

The first three miles from WALSINGHAM on the way to HOLT, continue to shew the progress of the hatchet, and the boundaries of the estate of Mr. *****, are marked so accurately by that fell conveyancer, that you take measure of them for a full league, on both sides the road, whereon you are left with scarce the shelter of a hedge, much less of a tree, the truth of which I might justly say, a forest of stumps evince. You know your return to foliage, the exact point at which the spoilers have been constrained to

check their course. The traveller, and Nature herself are relieved by the change.

I stop in a little road-side glen of Oaks on the left, about a mile from the first village belonging to Sir George Chad, to enjoy the alteration. I have given the rein to my horse, who in the midst of the shaded grass, which has still some of the morning dew upon it, seems to luxuriate in the change.

We will now set off mutually refreshed—he better able to carry me to new scenes and objects, and I more disposed to explore and describe them.

I need not request you, or any traveller, but a blind one, to pause when he has gained the summit of a little rising in the road, about a mile of Holt. The prospect from thence will, as one of our bards boldly expresses it,

“ Take captive the wild motion of the eye”

by a thousand pictorial attractions. The seat and grounds of Mr. JODDRIL—the variegation of wood, pasture, and corn-fields, on the uplands to the left, and of the church; its round

tower, the house and gardens of Mr. Hurd, Mr. Ouse, and, indeed, of the whole pretty village, with the refreshing sight and sound of the mill-water below, will amply reward your attention; the rather, if you come from WAL-SINGHAM, to which, for the wide-wasting circumstances already detailed, it forms a very striking contrast. What that lordship of Mr. *****'s *was* antecedent to its honours being *put* to the axe—this is; and though, in both, the rise and fall of the ground are alike happy, the manor of Mr. JODRELL serves only to display the outrage committed on the other more lamentably. Let me recommend to you to take a retrospective view of this landscape, half a mile after you have past its front. Stop at an opening in the road about that distance from the village, opposite a detached cluster of oaks, to your left, and it will be still better if you are upon a residentiary horse, you may throw his bridle at full length on his docile neck at the gate, which you will find precisely in this place, and he may entertain himself one way, with the herbage within his reach, while you are regaled another—

or, if you are disposed to cross the adjoining fields, and ascend the hill to its summit, you will be yet more gratified. I stood charmbound. I penciled what I now retrace with the pen—and I defy any one, who has but a relish of the painter or poet, the lover of nature, or any lover; or even the cool-headed, and quiet-hearted man,—who has plain good sense though he admits not enthusiasm, but whose eye is a fair medium betwixt Painter and Poet—not to be delighted “to the top of his *compass*.” But, notwithstanding I have here brought a middle man into this argument, I may be suspected to have been influenced by the enthusiastic love I profess, and which you know I really feel, for the beauties of Nature. I dare permit you to call in the most plain proseist you please, as a judge, and have nothing to fear from his sentence, while I pronounce the spot on which the seat of Mr. JODRELL is placed, as, one of the *most* lovely in England,—considering its extent. In proof of which assertion, I shall bring the terrace, the varieties of sea and land-views—the sudden shutting out of society, so

that you are left, as it were, alone in the vast creation,—the abrupt discovery of the peopled world—then by a few steps, your second retreat from, or return to, human kind, and its busy occupations—the invitations to solemn musing which steal upon you, as you find yourself insensibly enveloped in, literally, a grove of ivy; and the disposition you feel to indulge gayer thoughts as you disembower from thence into brighter foliage, amidst the inspiration of flowers,—your ideas expanding like the blossoms, whose tints you seem to borrow, and weave into, as well as colour, your thoughts and sensations; — Hence, I conceive, the Bard, and the Painter, derive their most vivid hues: and it is, I should imagine, from such real scenes, charming the senses, and touching the soul—it is from the magic force of such originals—immediately under the eye, and at the heart—that we have copies of Nature, second in grace and beauty only to their originals. Such copies may be taken at Bayfield, and I can venture to promise your Genius, that the door of the mansion will be opened to you

by Hospitality, and that "as a stranger," you will be welcomed as a guest.

A provincial history speaks of the picture of a Tortoise in the manor-house, with the following inscription :

"This tortoise, in 1685, was brought by Mr. Robert Swallow from Smyrna to Bayfield, and in July, 1686, given to John Jermy, Esq. It yearly, in November, went under ground : there laid and slept till the latter end of March. In May, she made a hole in the middle of a gravel-walk, most open to the sun, and therein usually laid nine eggs, but never produced any young, having no commerce with a male. She was found dead in the earth in April, 1783."

The beautiful little village, however, which, both at the foot of Bayfield and at the approach to HOLT, forms so important, and so lovely a part of the enchanting scenery, is annoyed by one intruder.

My friend, there is not in the round of vice, any thing more baneful to the reason, dignity, and every other sublime distinction of man, than a virtue broke from its proper bound,

—even the noblest and the best—an *over-charged, and intemperate idea of devotion*. It is the lawless meteor of the soul, that, rushing from its sphere, sets the little globe of man on fire : it consumes whatever it approximates, and is as far from the true, the pure, and the attempered religion of a benign Redeemer, and, —I humbly hope I am not presumptuous in adding—as distinct from the worship which Religion's God requires, as the burning flame of a wild irregular comet, which—though for wise reasons, it is permitted to affright the air—as the terrestrial meteor just spoken of does the earth, and the blessed, and blessing orb, which, with a fix'd and steady radiance, a permanent *principle* of warmth, animation, and glory—enlivens, and enlightens the universe.

Hallowed, thrice hallowed be *every* pure aspiration. Sacred, on that ground, be the worshipped feather, the idolized stone, and the adored image, of whatever materials it may be formed—The motive that deified it, and that bends before it the knee of the untutored, and humbles the spirit of the unguided, shall give it

lustre, even in the eyes of the illumined Christian, and, I doubt not, of the Christian's God.

But can philanthropy or pity — can even christianity itself, my dear Baron, with all its wondrous store of charities, forbear a sigh, or tear, to reflect, that, at the close of the eighteenth century, the best emotions of the human soul, springing, I dare aver, in general, from the most pious impulses, should be carried to an *excess* which dethrones all the faculties, the power, and the majesty of that soul?—emotions which destroy at once both the means and the ends of religion? Does not an evil of this giant stature grow out of the gloomy, and terrific devotion, which is substituted for one of meekness, benevolence, and joy?

The Father of all true religions forbid that the spirit of toleration should ever be restrained! God forbid! that,—in this country more especially,—the liberty of praying to the Great Bestower, each member of the community, according to what he feels most consonant to the sentiment by which he is moved, and

to what he hopes may be most acceptable to the Power whom he supplicates, should ever be violated. Be religious liberty the most distinguished, and most appreciated, as it must ever be the most sacred part, of British freedom! would to heaven it were so throughout the world—would it were the charter of the whole universe! But is it not deeply to be deplored that in almost every quarter of the civilized earth, there should more or less prevail an idea, which, by torturing particular passages, or expressions in the holy volume of Faith, from their true import, our very nature is debased, and the figure and form which we are allotted to wear, made lower even than the lowest orders of creatures, which are said by the very same scriptures, to be put in subjection under our feet? Weak, ineffectual, frail, and in every breath we draw dependent, unquestionably we are—but what wise, or pious purpose is to be answered, or how is the great work of penitence, or of peace to be promoted, by our being represented as the “*heirs of hell!*” and that, to make us *heirs of heaven*, we must be “snatched

from the arms of the devil," or come to a pitched battle with Belzebub, until,

" Though devils rage, and hell assail,

We cut a passage through."

Or, what good can ever be proposed, what pious principle established, by thus furiously holding out dark images of our " contemptible," and perishable state, and often in filthy, sometimes even *indecent* language?—thus degrading instead of exalting the prime work on earth, of Him who made us the creatures of his hands,—thus opprobriously implicating even the Creator?

Such images, however, will be seen publicly displayed in various fugitive poems, in songs, hymns, and prayers not far from Bayfield-Hall, and in too many other parts of England. Johnson imputed the great success which attends the religionists, to whom I here allude, to their expressing themselves in a plain and familiar manner, which, he thought, the only way to do good to the common people, and which clergymen of genius and learning ought to do from a principle of duty, when it is suited

to their congregations; a practice for which they will be praised by men of sense. To insist, says the Doctor, against drunkenness as a crime, because it debases Reason, the noblest faculty of man, would certainly be of no service to the common people; but to tell them that they may *die* in a fit of drunkenness, and shew them how dreadful that would be, cannot fail to make a deep impression. It seems to have been the opinion of this great man, that the established Clergy in general did not preach plain enough; and that polished periods and glittering sentences flew over the heads of the common people, without any impression upon their hearts. Something might be necessary, he imagined, to excite the affections of the common people, who were sunk in languor and lethargy, and therefore he supposed that the new concomitants of what we call *methodism* might probably produce so desirable an effect. The mind, like the body, he conceived, delighted in change and novelty, and even in religion itself courted new appearances and modifications. Whatever, therefore, might be

thought of some methodist teachers, he said, he could scarcely doubt the sincerity of that man who travelled nine hundred miles in a month—and I could name many virtuous men who have exceeded this—the excellent Mr. Wesley was one,—who preached twelve times a week!—no adequate reward, *merely temporal*, could be given for such indefatigable labour.

The general *sincerity* of this sect I have fully admitted; nor do I hesitate to approve the unlaboured manner, and the conversation-style*

* An apt, and in many respects beautiful, illustration of this occurs in the village-discourses of a late minister of the Dissenting congregation in Cambridge—Mr. ROBINSON, who, like his favourite Calvin, answered well to the character given of that celebrated Theologian by Scaliger, who pronounced him to be—“*Solidus theologus, et doctus,* styli sat purgater. ***** Ille literas sacras tractavit, ut tractanda sunt, vere, inquam et pure, et simpliciter sine ullis argumentationibus scholasticis.*”

The subject is the beauty and advantage of Morning Exercise: and so close does he bring the domestic imagery

* “A solid and learned Theologian, his style is sufficiently chastened
 * * * * *
 he handled the sacred writings as they ought to be handled; I mean with an eye to truth, with purity, and with simplicity, without any scholastic reasonings.”

of delivery in which they frequently *begin* their effusions, whether studied or spontaneous; al-

under the eye, and so in unison is it with the train of thought I have been led into, that one might believe the writer had luxuriated with me in the landscape of Bayfield, and joined my regret, at the dark shadows which are thrown upon the village below.

“ It is in the morning, more particularly, that *the ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib*. Then, if ever, man feels himself the monarch, and to him who rises first, all domestic animals pay their homage. One winds and purs about him, another frisks and capers and doth all but speak. The stern mastiff and the plodding ox, the noble horse and the harmless sheep, the prating poultry and the dronish ass, all in their own way express their joy at the sight of their master; he is a god to them, for *the eyes of all wait on him, and he giveth them their meat in their season*. Let us observe how much these creatures contribute to our ease and comfort through life; let us remark that we owe them all they look to us for; let us acknowledge the debt, and our inability to discharge it without the supplies of Providence; let us address our prayers and praises to that good Master in heaven, whose stewards we have the honour to be; let us lay up for this great family, who have *neither store-house nor barn*; let us supply them with a liberal hand; and for wisdom and prudence to perform all these duties, let us resolve with the psalmist, *My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord. In the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up*.

“ When man walks abroad in a morning, every sense is

though I must notice that they frequently sink into the *mean*, while they are sedulous to preserve the *familiar*; yet, I have to lament that they too seldom *continue* in this simplicity, either of argument or expression, but work themselves gradually up from moderation to vehemence, both of gesture and tone, and some times, by a

feasted, and the finest emotions of an honest and benevolent heart are excited. Above, the spacious canopy, the tabernacle, or tent, for the sun, in a thousand clouds of variegated forms, glowing with colours in every conceivable mixture, skirted and shaded with sulky mists, afford a boundless track of pleasure to the eye. Around, the fragrant air, perfumed by a variety of flowers, refreshes his smell. He snuffs the odour, and tastes, as it were, in delicate mixtures the sours and the sweets. The village pours forth its healthful sons, each with his cattle parting off to his work, with innocence in his employment, a ruddy health in his countenance, and spirits and cheerfulness in his address, that make him an object of envy to a king. Here the sly shepherd's boy surveys and plots for his flock, and there the old herdman tales and talks to his cattle, and loves, patting their flanks, to chant over the history of every heifer under his care. And have I only nothing to do in this busy scene: have I nothing to say among so many voices? Am I a man, and have I no pleasure in seeing the peace and plenty, the health and happiness of my fellow-creatures? Have I no good wishes for them? O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will cheerfully LOOK UP."

sudden spiritual jerk, bound up from the still small voice of persuasive remonstrance and good sense, to anathemas and reprobations of themselves, and rhapsodies to God, are piled mountain high, making Ossa, indeed, "like a wart!" For the *sincerity*, however, even of these paroxysms, I give credit, in by far the greater part of the auditory. I have seen, not remote from the spot whence these reflections have just been drawn, the most unequivocal testimonies of genuine feeling—I have seen it, my friend, in the scalding tears that have deluged the cheeks of youth, and of age,—in the uplifted eye, that turning abhorrent from the wickedness of the creature—looks to the mercy of the Creator, in the now pallid, and now crimson flushes of a distorted countenance—and I have heard its voice, rising from the first agitated sigh, to the last distracted groan of a fermenting, and heated soul. But it is as the raging heat of the dog-star that withers the sweet herb and flower, not as the benign planet that nourishes them. Betwixt deep humility, from a consciousness of imperfection and utter

self-abasement—there is surely as wide and important a difference, as betwixt arrogant pride, and the reverence which a lowly spirit may feel and indulge. The first, it is true, “was not made for man,” the second, I cannot but apprehend, was; because in *thus* reverencing himself, man reverences the Power who made him in his own express image. The horrors of a mind overburthened with a sense of guilt, will, no doubt, force a way into public notice from the most profound recesses of the bosom; and in such cases, the voice of Contrition may cry *aloud*, and be heard afar off; but, God forbid! this dire sentiment of acknowledged, or even of latent shame, should be general; and even in those lamentable instances it is not often that Penitence forgets the meekness and silence which are her characteristics. That a holy *fear*—a sacred awe—should mix with a *love* of God is natural; but partakes more of the emotion of a duteous child to a tender parent,—and what is the Omnipotent but the lovely Father of all mankind? The point I contend for, is, that of seeing him and his religion drawn in *that* charac-

ter: and what I complain of in many of the votaries of Methodism, is suffering the serious sentiment they truly feel, not only to throw over the hours of prayer a headlong terror and an enflaming zeal, which hurries them out of themselves, but impregnates their whole lives with the gloom of the grave. The cheerfulness which smiles around them in the fairest and purest works of the Almighty, as, for instance, they glow in the scenes of Bayfield, at this beautiful season, communicates no reflected complacency to many of the villagers below. Humanly speaking, when their lives are unspotted, when the seeds of Virtue in their hearts have shot up into the pure blossom, and yielded the fruit of good works, they still *fear* to shew, in the nameless relative and endearing alliances of life, that they *ought* to partake of the innocent hilarity,—in which every bird over their heads, every insect at their feet, every animal which lives but to assist, and which die to nourish them,—till the last unconscious moment of sacrifice—so generally REJOICE.

“ There are four sorts of people,” says the

amiable Author, who has furnished me with the example I have given you, in my last note, a few pages back, "and each of these persons is differently affected towards our Father which is in heaven." The first he describes as being *without* Him; the second as *against* Him; the third as *dreading* Him; the last," adds he, "love and adore Him." Of that class, I firmly believe, are very frequently the people called Methodists. But *excess of this dread* is often fatal to their individual comfort, and renders them in a manner useless as connected beings. The distraught or downcast eye, the shaded brow, the drooping figure, the melancholy air, and the heavy step, too often mark their progress through the cheerful walks of Nature and Society. Why is this? The volume of their faith and the blessed Author of it, recommend modest cheerfulness continually, and hold out a sweet assurance that the temple of God, the *everlasting* temple,—and surely the earthly one should copy its character,—instead of being filled with *general* lamentations, ungovernable sentiments, foaming expressions of them, and convulsive

gesticulations, exhibits to the virtuous *the fullness of joy!* and should not even the wicked when he turneth away from his wickedness, console his wounded spirit with the inexpressible goodness and smiling love, rather than the desolating or withering frown of the Power, "who pitieth and forgiveth, even as a father pitieth his children?"

Those whose *dread* overwhelms their love, are, in truth, the sincerest objects of pity. The Author above-mentioned, in his own familiar, yet impressive manner, is of the same opinion; and by an allusion drawn from common life, gives a lively representation of the *mercy* of the Deity as a solace from the terror of his judgments. It brings to so good an issue the whole of this argument, is so illustrative, and favours the comfortable idea I so wish to establish, that it shall close my present Letter.

"Suppose I could take a person out of this assembly"—he addressed this from the pulpit—"one who had never seen the sea, and carry him in an instant to the sea-side, and set him

down there; and suppose the sea at that instant to be in a storm: the great, black, and dismal clouds rolling, thunders bellowing, lightnings flashing, the winds roaring, the sea dashing ten thousand watery mountains one against another, the beach covered with shattered timber and cordage, merchandise and corpses; this man would instantly conceive a dreadful idea of the sea, and would shudder, and shriek, and flee for his life. It would be hard to give this man a pleasant notion of the sea, especially if he had been well-informed that several of his relations and friends had perished in the tempest; yet this man would have but *half* a right notion of the sea; for could he be prevailed on to go down on the beach a few days after, the heavens would smile, the air be serene, the water smooth, the seamen whistling and singing, here a vessel of trade sailing before the wind, there a fleet of men of war coming into harbour, yonder pleasure boats basking in the sun, the flute making melody of the breeze, the company, even the softer sex, enjoying themselves without fear; this man would then form

the *other* half-notion of the sea; and the two put together would be the just and true idea of it. Apply this, and your confidence in God will be as much greater than your dread, as his **MERCIES** are greater than his **PUNISHMENTS**.

LETTER XXI.

HOLT, Sept. 1798.

THE distance from LETHERINSET to Holt is scarcely more than a mile, but were it a league, your eye would find welcome occupation. The town of Holt stands on a hill, which, were I writing to a Dutchman, I should call lofty, but to a Switzer, I shall only venture to say, its top is airy enough for health, and it is scarce necessary to observe it affords a sufficient scope for a prospect of vernal beauty; for it includes a summary view of all that I have detailed in my way from Hillington, Houghton, and Fakenham; the richest variegation of scenery, perhaps, in Norfolk; of which, indeed, it has been called the garden. Not

that I would have you attach too much faith to this expression generally, though in this particular instance it happens to be true; because I have frequently found men and books, paying the like compliment to several parts of the same county; insomuch, that one might deem the whole district to consist of garden-ground: and sometimes where there is little preference to be made in any of the spots favoured.

There has been a complaint as to water, the want of which was severely felt some years ago; but the landlord of the *Feathers*, a good well-attended Inn, which I recommend to you, asserts that this objection is entirely removed.

Holt is generally under-rated by publishing travellers, who have agreed to say "it contains some good houses." It may be improved; for at this very day that I am writing of it, I must give the preference to most others of the same size I have seen in any part of England. It is extremely clean, has a countenance of neatness, something of an air of gentility, and most of the enviring cottages convey to the spectator an image of comfort.

Sir John Gresham, who was born here, bought the manor-house, which he converted into a school, endowing it with the manor, which is now in a flourishing condition, under the auspices of a very able and amiable man, Mr. Atkins. The school-house, may be called in every sense, the best house in a town, where, as I have said, there are *many* good. You saw too much of my questionnaire habits abroad, to be surprised at my entering into unceremonious chat with some of my compatriot school-boys, who were playing near the house. I singled the boy, who seemed to bow to me in the most answerable shape, and thus encouraged, I set off on my interrogatory poney.

"How many scholars, my little fellow?"—

"Six boarders."—"How many day-scholars?"

"—Very few now, Sir, in harvest time."

"Why, they are not sons of farmers, are they?"—"No, Sir, Gleaners." It was quite impossible to help observing to my little intelligencer, that *I was one too*.

"The youth looked at my boots, as if he did not believe a word of the matter.

"And are ye all good in school, and merry out of it?—and do you fight and make it up, and play the truants bravely?"

"That is what we do," exclaimed several together."

"And mind our books, too, now and then, when we can't help it," cried a taller stripling than the rest, archly."

"And, I dare say, you love nuts, apples, and pies, as well as I did at your age. Let me see, there are five of you, and that small piece of silver will divide into as many parts, leaving a Benjamin portion for my friend here, whom I have troubled with so many questions."

For an idea of the delight that attached to this poor donation, you must go back to the blithsome period when a penny was competence, and sixpence riches. Time wears away the fine and pure sense of these things—but memory brings them back, and the very soul hangs over the recollection when such small circumstances occur to us in the bustle of life.

THE ride from Holt to SHELLINGHAM, must be taken like many other things in this various world—on compromise.—You pass from the town of Holt almost immediately on a heath, which on the left gives you nothing but fern, thistles and rabbits, to the extent of your horizon; but then your view to the left is recompenced by a pretty bordering of country, and its villages, spires, &c. &c. True it is, that the continuity of the heath, for near four miles, is a little fatiguing—the rabbits gambol without effect—and I found the sheep-boys, with whom I attempted to converse, even sillier than their sheep. You have nothing, therefore, for it but to get to better things as fast as you can—and a quarter of an hour's brisk riding will bring you to them; for, after rising from a deep descent, which terminates this dreary scene, the ocean lifts itself unexpectedly to view, and the irregular elevations between the land and the water are finely covered with wood—you wind gradually along a valley, on the lofty sides of which nothing is to be seen, even to the summits, but dark green broom, and a few straggling trees

that slope almost to the vale, and seem even to be themselves in fear of falling. Pursuing the meander, you reach the first Shellingham, from whence I continue my Letter.

It is remarkable for nothing but miserable-looking huts, and by no means merry-looking inhabitants—there is a large supply of little shoe and stockingless children*—as there always is in villages near the sea—Venus, you know, sprung from thence. They open the gates on the road—and scramble, and grub, and combat, for the reward of a halfpenny thrown amongst them,—like warriors, fighting, and tearing up the earth, and each other, for † different objects

* I should not, however, have omitted to mention, that there is *one* nursery at WALSINGHAM, besides that of the fir-grove, which is in a very thriving condition. The youth of both sexes, from the age of three to eighteen years, are so peculiarly well-featured, formed and coloured, that it will be impossible not to distinguish them—In comparison of the little starveling run-a-bout dabs that shoal on the beach, grub for shrimps, or muddle at the ebb of the tide for eels, they seem beings of another world. Let the flourishing state of these *human* plantations, therefore, be considered as a set-off against the barren condition of the vegetable nursery.

† “A little larger, but as senseless quite.”

—and whoever is so lucky as to find and bear it off from the rest, is as proud as any such warriors of the greatest victory that was ever obtained by the most illustrious butcher of them all; which was, as I take it, the Great Alexander of Greece, or the Great Frederick of Prussia, or the Greatest of the Great Nation, or any other great Conqueror who may happen to be your Hero, my good Friend, and my good Reader.

The second Shellingham is a mile beyond the first, and your passage to it is over some well-cultivated arable lands, which conduct you to the good, and, indeed, only inn of that place, (the Crown) situated on the verge of the cliff, where you will find, a civil innholder, good accommodation, and a comfortable bed, on which it being now ten o'clock, I will prepare to repose, and wish you a good night.

HOLT, *September.*

THERE is a brave passing and repassing of property of the HOLT Manor, as, indeed, there is in the county-histories of all manors. The Confessor found or *made* this—kings, you know, are

said to have long hands—an extensive lordship. Since which there has been a grand string of conveyances, grants, and counter-grants, very interesting, no doubt, to the vanity of a lineal heir, and, at least, as entertaining to some readers, as might be to others the long-winded genealogy of a running horse, or of a game cock; but as this correspondence is not made for any of those readers, it has all along declined the honours of pedigree, either in regard to man or beast. Yet in this particular place there is such a glorious uncertainty as to possessors and possession, that I really must stoop to gather it up for you.

From the first year of Richard the II. son of the Black Prince, so honoured in our annals, and the last year of Henry VIII—of whom we do not quite so much boast—intervened a space of one hundred and sixty-eight years. Now here is an hiatus of the possession, and different proprietors of almost two centuries: during which we know nothing even of the name or pedigree of the lord or lady landholders, either in this county,—or in any other part of the British empire, with the exception

of Wales, for the histories of that principality "being extant," says an historian, "*before Adam*, and the language in which the Cambrian families are recorded, being only known to the inhabitants of that country, it is impossible for a *postdiluvian* writer to speak of their annals with a precision, which may possibly ascertain the right line of descent from the *creation of the world* DOWN to *Adam, Eve, and paradise!*" English records, we are sensible," adds the same historian "are not so exact, and that they are lamentably deficient, this instance may be given among a thousand others."

It is really a most grievous thing, my friend, that I cannot fill up this wide gap to your satisfaction,—at least, so far as relates to the county of Norfolk. I have not time; I have not life for such important researches; but I think you may safely conclude from your knowledge of the human passions, that every inch of ground was fought for, lost and won, disputed and maintained with the usual rage and rapacity, under the more popular names of courage and heroism; and that in progress of

the whole hundred and sixty-nine years, perhaps, not a second instance could be found, of a man of landed estate, who, like Mr. ***** would have suffered even a crab-tree to be cut down, or relinquish as much land as would feed a thistle, or afford a seat to the poor little bird that now and then pecks at its down. Alas! my friend, what is the history of the whole earth, so far as respects *property*, but a tissue of private and public quarrels, of conquest and of defeat, of battle, murder, and sudden death? From the famous strife at Marathon, four hundred years *before* CHRIST, to that of Pontas in Catalonia, when the French were defeated, in 1795, after the birth of our SAVIOUR,—or shall we carry it a year nearer to us, and say, to the conquest of the Piedmont Sardinians — the bloody line might, you know, be extended, in dreadful proximity, to the times before us, even to the crimson moment at which I write—but, how does the soul shrink appalled at the aggregate of slaughter! at the devastation of men, the desolation of women, and the groans of the blushing earth! The specific account of the deaths in

that lapse of time, and the little real private or public good attained by the then living, and yet existing nations, with the melancholy disproportion which has but too generally subsisted between the cause and the effect—might lead a reflecting mind to think—but it is amongst the subjects on which reflection loses itself, and all that is left—perhaps, all that is permitted us—is to fall out with one another for the earth, or for any thing it inherits, as little as we can help; and to have something as much *like* a wise and moral reason—we have always a political, or compromising one—when it seems inevitable. Secondary to the loss of *blood*, in these “never-ending, still beginning” contests is, that of *property*. A very curious, and, I believe, very correct estimate of both these, as sustained by Europe, through the means of the French Republic, has lately fallen under my eye. Perhaps it has come under yours, as it is a translation from documents, of which the original is in Germany: but it so strongly corroborates the foregoing remarks I cannot deny it a place.

The recapitulation stands thus:—

Loss in Territory of his Imperial Majesty	£.56,094,000
Ditto of his Prussian Majesty	239,200
Holland	34,949,800
Various territories, from Holland to Alsace: particularly the country between the Moselle, Meuse, and Rhine	5,331,200
Thiers	244,800
Palatinate	498,480
Deux Ponts	178,200
Suabia	2,310,337
Dutchy of Bergen	98,500
The Empire. Second Campaign ..	18,562,455
Wurtemberg	521,244
Bavaria	678,800
Baden	131,800
Milan, or Cisalpine Republic	11,360,000
Sardinia; considerable tract of territory	
Modena	410,000
Lucca	200,000

Carried over 131,814,876

Brought over £.131,814,876	
Parma	154,000
Naples	6,000
Genoa	160,000
Tuscany	320,000
Imperial territory	
Venice	6,881,832
Spain	1,200,000
Portugal	1,440,000
Switzerland	412,000
Hamburg	280,000
Bremen and Lubeck	120,000

[The losses of Men, and the expences of War are not included here; as England alone has spent many million pounds sterling.]

Total amount of requisition: and contributions, as specified 143,290,707

Loss of the Dutch, by the bankruptcies of the great nation 76,800,000

Unvalued property; as plate of the churches, maintenance of the armies, palaces, houses, national

Carried over 362,879,415

Brought over £.362,879,415
 domains, property of the emigrants
 in the conquered countries, forti-
 fications, ceded territories, their
 regular revenues, &c. &c. 800,000,000
 Enormous amount of assignats,
 mandats, &c. poured out amongst
 mankind, whereby millions of
 credulous people were deceived—
 Fifty milliards of assignats; where-
 of, including what was lost by fo-
 reigners in the public funds, one-
 third may be taken in calculation 666,666,667
 A great number of large and small
 American vessels, taken without a
 declaration of war, by piracy,
 which amount in number to more
 than one thousand; and valuing
 each with its cargo at only one
 thousand pounds, the amount is 1,000,000
 A number of vessels taken from the
 other neutral powers together 4,000,000

Carried over 1,834,546,082

Brought over £.1,834,546,082

[N.B. No reckoning is made as to the losses of Great Britain and Ireland in commercial vessels, as the French have lost more than their amount in ships of war.]

Total loss of Europe then, my dear Baron, in money, goods, and territory 1,691,757,374

£.3,526,303,456

Should any one find this calculation over-rated, he will please to consider, that all the countries conquered by the French nation were the most rich, populous, industrious, and fruitful parts of the Continent; and that the Republic has at present the best fourth part of Europe* under her command. She has so

* Since this Letter was sent into Germany, and, indeed, since it was at the English Press, the wheel of belligerent Fortune—has taken a retrograde motion, whirling more rapidly backwards—even than it had gone forward—to the discomfiture of the Colossus-Republic, and the remuneration of

rounded and fortified herself, that she is enabled to keep all nations in a state of perpetual agitation.

At the bottom of the melancholy account we may still draw a dear-bought moral — “The picture of fallen states,” says an ingenious observer, upon this calculation, “affords a striking lesson at this moment to surrounding nations; but there is something peculiarly striking, and worthy of observation in the fall of Athens.”

“In Athens,” says Plutarch, “there were men not to be surpassed in the world; but its bad citizens were not to be equalled in impiety, perfidiousness, and cruelty, by any age or country.” Plutarch was an historian, not a prophet: he spoke of things that had been, not of men that would be.

Athens was renowned for the polish of its manners, and the splendour of its military character. The important battles of Marathon,

Austria; but still proving that the blood and treasure which purchased victory in the first instance, have been yet more exhausted in the second.

Salamis, and Plataea, had given new lustre to its glory, and new power to its consequence. Its citizens, therefore, aspired to a superiority above the other states of Greece. Proud in their power, and haughty in their success, they grew arrogant in their demands, and claimed supremacy. They hurled the brand of discord and war amongst nations, to light themselves to aggrandizement upon the ruins of their fall. For, notwithstanding their confused democracy within, the success of their arms without had forced the other states of Greece into subjection. It had awed them into a confederacy. These conquerors went on to the borders of Egypt, having, at that moment, according to Aristophanes, a thousand cities under their dominion. But their arrogance abroad, and intemperance at home, sealed the instrument of their fate—

THE ABUSED STATES UNITED.

The destruction of that people was resolved on, which claimed paramount power over the rest. A single pique was widened into universal war, and the arms of all nations were turned against Athens. After twenty-eight years of

bloodshed, it fell into ruin. Thirty tyrants started up to oppress her within, and she groaned under the weight of her own calamities. These monsters, with power in their hands, exhibited but deeds of blood, and designs of horror. All those who had possessed themselves of estates were put to death without form of justice. And, without pique or grudge, those were sacrificed for their riches, who had sacrificed others for the same. Their transports of cruelty and covetousness were so boundless, that they turned *even upon themselves*, and spared not Theramenes, one of their own number. The analogy, indeed, the counter part of this Athenian record, is brought so *home* to the immediate history and prospect of a particular part of modern Europe, that a striking parallel must be drawn in every eye that views, and every mind that contemplates it.

LETTER XXII.

CROMER, *Sept.* 1798.

A RESPLENDANT morning shone on my farther progress. SHERINGHAM * Priory is an object that will command your notice in the

* SHERINGHAM is divided into Upper and Lower; the houses in the former being nearly a mile from it, whilst those of the latter are so close to the beach as frequently to suffer by the impetuosity of the tides. Lower Sheringham is situated on a ruin of the cliff projecting on the beach, and the cliff gradually rises on each side to upwards of an hundred yards; the sea gains considerably here, and it is not uncommon to observe large pieces of arable land carried away with corn growing on it, betwixt seed time and harvest, so near do the people plough to the edge of a cliff.—It strikes a stranger with awe to look down. A very considerable fishery is carried on from this place, of cod, skate, and whiteings, but especially crabs and lobsters, with which this place and Cromer chiefly supply the London Market, by vessels which take the fish from the boats while at sea. There is a very good, and, indeed, the only inn at Lower Sheringham, much resorted to in Summer; the dining

degree that it has recently attracted mine; and if you take your way to it by the brook—or as they call it in this country, the *beck*—you will meet with a courteous reception from the well-informed gentleman-farmer upon whose grounds the ruin stands.* He will shew you the spot

room stands on the very edge of the cliff, and at high water no land can be seen from the windows. Sometimes thirty or forty fishing boats within a mile of the shore, and fleets of three hundred colliers and other large trading vessels pass so near, that with the naked eye you may discover the men on board. At low water the beach is enlivened by the multitude of fishermen either drying their nets, hawling up their boats, repairing their tackle, landing their fish, or securing their lobsters and crabs in coys, a sort of boxes fixed to the rocks, which the sea overflows and fills at every tide. This prospect may be enjoyed within doors, but when abroad you will be charmed by the beauty of the country, surrounded by richly cultivated, and what in Norfolk may be called bold and lofty hills; from one to the east of Lower Sheringham you command an extensive view of the sea-coast, abruptly bounded by Cromer light-house, about four miles to the east, whilst the eye is lost towards the west, after wandering over both the Sheringhams.

* Of the ruins, the church which is near to the British ocean, the whole west gavel wall, with the arch of the window, is standing; the length of the church itself, with

where the stone coffin was discovered about thirty years since by Blomfield, and a variety of other particulars respecting the antiques; and if you have the luck that I had, you will see several very pretty moderns, in the form of his fair daughters, who happened to be then in the garden that fronted his house.

Passing the farm you strike again into the CROMER road, and if you stop at the first field gate to your left, you will well employ your time in the survey of a very fine picture. The well built, comfortable, modern farm-house of the present times, with its garden, and nurseries, mixed with the reliques of the ancient Priory; Beeston-hill, and a similar ridge of smaller ones as its satellites, bounding your horizon; the ocean is seen through an arch to the left, and to the right, you have more expansive openings of it with various small craft and larger vessels

the nave, tower and chancel, was about forty-seven yards; the nave itself ten yards wide; the choir, or chancel, fifteen yards long within. South of the nave was the cloister; the north and south transept were twelve yards long each, and ten wide, enfolding chapel within chapel.

gliding over its bosom; while Beeston-church* standing close to the beach, serves at once as a pleasure-mark to the traveller, and as a sea-guide to the tar.

You then proceed by a pleasant green lane till you come to the village of Further Run-ton, in which you have an elegant villa, situated in a romantic valley, screened by a continuation of the hills, and rendered more picturesque by several hanging groves, ornamented by a thick wood in the back ground, consisting of fir, sycamore, oak, and elm, less injured by their proximity to the sea than they certainly would have been had they not been under protection of the glen. The road onward, shews on one side, far-extended mountains more barren of foliage yet not destitute either of cultivation or verdure, and on the other, the broadened ocean

* The site of Beeston Priory and lands are now in the possession, and, I believe, the property of Mr. Thomas Woodrow. The Priory was dedicated to St. Mary, in the reign of our King John, for Canons of the order of St. Augustin.

spreads to the limit of your view. You have Cromer church and light-house all the way in front as the vista of your prospect.

The Norfolk Tourist, and all the other historians, have done what they could for CROMER; desiring their readers will suffer its *situation* and the scenery around it, to make amends for the town itself. On the ostensible common facts they are all so accordant—as to the *mediocre* buildings and foot-piercing streets, and a few other objects,—that nothing can be added to the old accounts which will do the *interior* of the place further service.

The embattled church has been a magnificent, and is still an interesting structure. It was built about the year 1396: its steeple, which is 159 feet high, is square and richly ornamented with free-stone sculpture: the chancel is in ruins. About a mile to the east of the town is the light-house. Cromer boasts a great fishery for lobsters and crabs, and within the last few years, a considerable number of herrings have been taken on the coast.

The fair is on Whit-Monday, which

draws together the neighbourhood. To a mind that can receive pleasure from seeing others happy, without despising or arguing upon the *reasons* of their being so, this is a striking scene; several hundreds of truly delighted beings of all sexes and ages, in their holiday cloaths, are seen from the cliff in boats, enlivening the sea, whilst swarms of people who cannot get boats enough to gratify their desire of floating, impatiently wait on the beach, which they cover.

There is now no harbour at Cromer, yet corn is exported, and coals, deals, &c. received in return. The vessels used are from 60 to 100 tons burden, few larger: at high water they are laid upon the beach, and, as soon as the water is sufficiently ebb'd, carts are drawn to the side of the ship, and the coals shot into them, as they are into lighters in other places: but the carts carry only half a chaldron at a time, as the road up the cliff is very steep. In this manner the carts continue working, till the water flows so high as to wash the sides of the horses, and just to float the carts; they can then unload sometimes sixty chaldron in a tide. When the

vessel is empty it floats on a high tide, and continues at a little distance from the shore, and is then loaded with corn by boats, as they seldom run the hazard of loading them when laid on the Beach, lest contrary wind should prevent their getting off with the cargo.

While I thus report what has been reported, and seem to catch eagerly at these poor coal-barges and corn-boats—or any thing *like* a curiosity—methinks, my friend perceives the difficulty I am in between a wish to promise him something worthy of his attention in this little sea-port, and the impossibility of accomplishing it, *so far as mere town goes*; which, in my opinion, is not very far *any where*, out of the metropolis.

But the *exterior* of Cromer is replete with interesting and commanding objects: blending, indeed, some things which are sublime with many that are beautiful. The cliffs, and sands combine both these. To the fullest extent of a various walk, or ride, the Beach is in itself an object of peculiar attraction. It is broad, firm, and smooth, I think, beyond any I have seen.

May I not flatter myself you have in recollection the Beach verses which were drawn from me at SCHEVELING, in Holland, in my former Gleanings? and will it not be permitted me to consider the kind reception which I remember you gave them, as passports for more sea-side poesy? I cannot but anticipate your answer to this question, in the way most pleasing to me; and when we are our own respondents as well as appellants, and no one is at hand to put in a rejoinder, or to make a single objection, we are sure, you know, of our cause.—Take then what may follow from the influence of the poetic passion which I found rising at the view of the ocean—an element which has, in some respects, advantage of the land, even allowing the latter as in the scene before me, to be eminently beautiful. The ever-shifting varieties, either soft or sublime, rich or interesting, of the marine picture moving on the face of the water, its colouring, its quietude, its menace of a storm, and the storm itself—considering only the surface—are endless; and if you add the diversity of objects moving on it, each of those objects

presented in different points of view, according to the different periods and humours of the air and water by which they are influenced, it is altogether impossible that any fixed scenery, however diversified by the changes of the seasons, or of verdure, should, *as a novelty*, afford such amusement to the eye, and supply to the soul such trains of reflection.

Since I reached Cromer I have had the curiosity to keep watch, on the movements of this sublime object, from a window that commanded it, during the chief part of a day and evening; both of which exhibited, even in their own changes, a strong specimen of the vicissitude of human things. For beyond my power was it to catch the quick succession from shade to splendour, and from splendour again to shade; I passed many hours in my observatory—indeed, most part of the day and eve—then onward to the not-unwelcome pensive interval, when an embrowning cast of deeper shadowing follows the last sun-tints, and precedes the rising of the moon—this was accompanied by a still pause, as if nature was preparing her scenery for a new

change — groupes of spectators were on the Beach, many in the room with me were disposed to sympathy of silence.—It was sweet to attend the gradual peering, to the full lustre of the loveliest planet, to our vision, in the heavens—the patroness of philosophy, friendship, and love—softener of our woe, composer of our strife, the solacer of the wounded heart, chastener of our worst, encourager of our best contemplations.

Had Neptune himself sent his azure chariot to receive, with a chosen suite of his sea-nymphs to invite and escort me to his coral palace, I scarce could have been more awed, more softened, or more *enchanted*; sometimes at the window—sometimes ruminating on the cliff, and sometimes pacing along, or listening to the surf-sound, the flap of the boat-sail, or the measured dash of the distant oar.

My heart warmed, its sensibility kindled, its rapture glowed! I penciled its effusions—begun and ended—just as you will see them.—After a short pause I will retrace them, so that they may go with this their introduction, in my next packet.

TO

THE SEA.

THE SEVEN

T O T H E S E A .

HAIL wonder-teeming element ! again
 From Albion's cliffs I greet thee ! Thy expanse,
 This Summer eve, just as the setting sun
 Tints thee with liquid gold, shews thee more pure,
 Ev'n than thy pearly caves, or coral throne.
 'Twere churlish in the twilight traveller
 Who, has e'er felt thy influence, on the nerve
 Sickness or sorrow has unstrung, and which thy power
 Elastic, has restor'd to wholesome tone,
 To pass thee by without his vesper homage.
 Were he ev'n Fortune's darling, or the child
 Most favour'd of Hygeia, and no aid
 Medicinal, or from thy salient wave
 Or nitrous air, or health-renewing herbs
 Of earth—thy neighbour, sure—thy aspect bland,
 " On such a night as this," might lure his step
 And woo his charmed eye, and raptur'd ear
 Awhile to tarry ! What though, while I pause,

That tinge of liquid gold, ev'n as I gaz'd,
Has, from the changing sky abruptly sunk
As if into thy billow, leaving there
The last faint rose of Eve,—new beauties pour
Upon th' enamour'd eye :—the dunner shades,
The deeper clouds, that o'er thy bosom draw
Their veils of sable, and yon beacon's light,
The friendly guide of nighted mariner ;
The scarce-heard sea-song of the fishing train,
Settling their nets in yonder scarce-seen boats,
Resolv'd to try the fortune of the tide :—
The merry chat of homeward harvesters,
And tribe of village maids, and matron dames,
The leasing bundle on their heads, who stop
To gaze on pensive stranger, and invite
His bounty to increase their gleanings store,
Nor shall their fellow-labourer refuse
His pittance scant, earn'd by a toil, perchance
Less wearisome, but humble as their own :
Yet, oh ! how cheaply may he send them home
More light and gladsome with their fragrant load,
Joyous as he whose gen'rous fields supplied
Their gradual sheaf—their little granary.
And, lo ! from yonder fleeces in the east
Of dappled yellow, light, with shade awhile
Contending, breaks the crescent moon, and shews

Thy placid surface more serenely sweet,
Mild as her own soft beams. Ah! say, fair Sea!
Who, that had only seen thee thus adorn'd—
Thy waves, chacing each other as in sport;
Thy sounds—soft as the breeze that fans thy breast,
And lightly heaving, as with sighs of love—
Say, who would think that thou couldst ever frown?
Who but would trust thee,—ev'n as trusts the Youth
The lovely maid whose all-attractive form
And plaintive voice, and mien of gentleness,
And aspect bland, and beauty-dimpled cheek
Has won his heart?—Yes, and that youth himself,
If haply now the all-attracting maid,
—While yet the moon her gentle lustre shed,—
Were at his side—breathing a whisper'd wish
To taste the breeze upon the freshen'd wave,
Would instant seize on yonder slender skiff,
And its light canvas spreading to the air,
Sail, nothing fearful, with his freight away
To lands unknown—relying on thy smile.

But what are smiles? Look at the smitten cliff,
Stain'd, ragged, gapp'd: for many a distant league
Earth disembowell'd, and her entrails vast,
Ferocious torn; deep in her hollow sides
Huge caverns scoop'd, and this ærial steep,

Which, but for thee, whole ages would have brav'd
 The pitiless rage of all the winds of heav'n;
 O'er time itself triumphant—added now
 To the flat beach—nor satisfied with this.
 Say, thou insidious!—where—O, where is now
 Ill-fated Shipden? * where her flocks, her herds,
 Spires, turrets, battlements? her mountains where,
 Whose tops look'd down upon thy proudest mast,
 And whose capacious base was seated deep
 Even as the secret chambers of the grave?
 Retire, mysterious tide, to lowest ebb;
 Roll back th' obedient waters, and display

* There was formerly a town called Shipden, betwixt this town and the ocean, but the sea has entirely swallowed up that town, and makes hasty strides towards devouring Cromer also, which now stands so near the edge of the cliff, that in the memory of many people now living there, upwards of twenty houses have at different times been precipitated into the sea.

At very low tides there is an appearance of something, which the fishermen call Shipden steeple. It is hardly probable, but that a large tower, whose foundations were an hundred feet perpendicular from the surface of the sea, after being tumbled into it, with the immense body of earth that supported it, and after being washed for many centuries by the waves, must have been so shattered and dashed to pieces, that no remains can be visible.

The mighty ruin of whole towns engulph'd, in less
 And acres upon acres hurl'd amain,
 From the defrauded shore—the mild abodes
 Of useful men,—a harmless peasantry,
 Precipitated prone into the flood!
 And ev'n their temple, where they decent met
 Each Sabbath morn and eve, devout to pray,
 Their place of sepulchre, their hallow'd bower
 Chang'd to tremendous rocks! and oft, tis said,
 The affrighted fisherman the steeple spies
 Above the waves: and oft the mariner,
 Driven by the whirlwind, feels his vessel strike
 Upon the mingled mass! So falsely fair
 Is Ocean's smile! and, haply, o'er the morn,
 That lucid stillness, and that frolic wave,
 Which smooth as streamlets with the moon beam plays,
 And that refreshing breeze—which kindly now,
 Fills the light sail of yon advent'rous smack
 That fans its vane—may, by some sudden gust,
 Swift as the winds with which thou art in league,
 And thy confederating lightnings, swell
 To raving storm, pollute the moon's fair face,
 And fright her from the sky—and not a star
 Remain to cheer the wide-investing gloom;
 Thy bosom, late so calm, convuls'd may heave
 With madd'ning groans, that mixing with the burst

Of deaf'ning thunder. Ah, too credulous youth,
In smiles believing, if, on the dark brine
The treasure of thy heart *then* tosses wild,—
Ev'n though, at the first warning of the air,
And agitated wave, thy skiff was turn'd
To shore, seen only by the livid flash
At intervals—in vain the hoisted sail,
Is cautious struck, in vain the oar is plied :—
Ev'n if the savage gale be full for shore,
And the fierce tide shall speed thy deadly course,—
Some faithless billow from behind, may overwhelm
Thy feeble bark, or lift it mountain high,
And in its fell descent, hurl thee to shore
Upon the surgy beach ;—nor suffer'd there
The *hope* of life restor'd ; but hurried thence,
By the returning wave—which with the rage
Of some mad glutton, seizes oft again
On what it has disgorg'd—may whirl thee back
Midst wrecks obscene, till thou, and thy soul's charge
Are dash'd at length upon some pointed rock
Old Shipden forms—while agonizing friends,
Parents, or little ones, or tender kin,
From the extremest verge of this tall cliff
Whereon I stand, or on the roaring sands,
With loud lamentings, wail thy wretched fate.

Nor, haply, with your destiny severe,
 Shall the insatiate tyrant of the sea
 End the dire horrors of a night, begun
 In peace—perchance the shaggy cliff itself,
 Deep fractur'd as it is, rood beyond rood,
 May fall the victim of another blast
 Dire as the new year's gale,* whose havoc wild
 The sires and matrons to their children tell,
 While shuddering terror seizes all the train
 Close-crouding round : and ere the moon again
 Her shade shall draw upon the twinkling beach,
 Thy relicks, CROMER, on the trembling verge
 Of the imperious main, thy watch-tower plac'd
 Upon thy proudest height, the beauteous hills
 That compass thee around, and yonder fane
 In its remains majestic, with whate'er
 Stand least remote from the devouring surge
 May swell its wasteful triumph, and may add
 Another heapy ruin to thy reign—
 Another Shipden ! while the barks that glide
 Now on thy chrystal breast, and all their store,
 Their little store, and yet their daily bread,

* So called from a dreadful hurricane which happened here
 about twenty years ago on New-Year's day.

Of the slight crews—the hardy fishing tribe,—
Be flung in fragments on a houseless shore.

Yet, why of partial evil thus complain,
The source of general good? Pardon, O world,
Of mighty waters! the reproachful lay.
What, though along thy coast, where fearless men
Their dubious dwelling build 'twixt sea and land,—
Discordant elements! mocking the rude shock
Of conflict where they meet—oft times, thy waves
Punish their rashness? What, though thy far-off sea,
Where thy strong, oak-ribb'd castles only dare
To fix their undulating stations bold,
And like thy own Leviathan, to swim
Th' enormous deep—which seems without a shore,—
Without a fathom—oft th' ambitious bark
And all its massy freight—a Country's wealth!
Bullion and ingots,—or a Country's power!
Engines of War, and Magazines of Death—
What—though even beauty finds a watry bier
In the gay barge, with all her splendid trim
Of silken pennons, colours, summer sails
On pleasure's voyage, and e'en in sight of home,—
Ah, what are private sorrows, private loss
Of treasure, tender kindred, life itself,
Pois'd with the *public blessing, or defence?*

A few fair drops from thy vast watry bed,
O most magnificent of things create!

Champion of England! thou her *true* St. George!
Her coasts, her cities, country, and her towns,
Protecting with a loving guardian's care!
Thou keep'st UNNUMBER'D DRAGONS IN THEIR DENS,
Though fierce for prey; or, if they venture forth
With vain ambition, or by meaner stealth,
'Tis thine to witness thy most favour'd sons,
Cover with conquering fleets thy billowy plain,
Commix the deathful element of fire
With water's power, till gorgeous victory
Flames on her burning wave—and thunder rolls,
The thunder of her cannon, scarce less fierce,
And far more fateful than the dreaded bolt
That falls from heaven, when on thy waves direct
It prone descends. And thou, the patron too,
Of all the COMMERCE of this happy isle,
The envy, the despair, but not the scorn
Of foes, unnumber'd as the sparkling sands
Upon her shore, and like the light surf thrown,
In bubbles on her breast—as LITTLE FEAR'D.

Ocean sublime! Britannia's pride and boast,
Keep, for thy native sons, their native rights,

The birth-right of the Trident—still their first,
Best charter of dominion; held in trust
For England's glory, purchas'd by the blood
Of England's gallant tars; by her true Drake,
And all the worthies of the Maiden reign,
Ev'n to the illustrious PAIR who now enjoy
The high reward of a whole people's love,—
Laurel'd St. VINCENT, and thy DUNCAN brave,
Like Raleigh one, another scourge of Spain,
And one like BLAKE, chastiser of the fell
And fierce Batavian, faithless as ingrate:
Then, to *each other* true, and *thou* her shield,
BRITANNIA shall defy the WORLD IN ARMS.

ADDENDA.

POSTSCRIPT.

It was soon after the foregoing Poem was written that the illustrious name of NELSON enriched the list of our naval glory. War must for ever be a scourge, but the love of country, my friend, is an inborn emotion; and to preserve our birth-place from invasion is a sacred principle that uplifts the filial arm throughout the globe.

The public mind about this period, combining its successive conquests, seemed at a loss to decide as to the comparative merit of the conquerors—all, in their consequences, and at different periods, it was well observed, had equal claims upon their country, and the achievement of each, in their order, has put the nation in a

condition to accomplish the one in succession. Like planets of the first magnitude, it seemed to be the wish of the proud empire on which they shone, and over which they presided, to concentrate their rays; and after they had received distinct admiration, the result of this *embodying* of their light, produced such an unrivalled *magnificence of lustre* expanding over the island, as must make the heart of every generous being, whether friend or enemy, kindle in the beams.

The theatres, the press, the very pulpits of the nation, have each, in their congenial manner, poured forth their tributes. I have read many, and could collect for you a library of several volumes dedicated to public gratitude—for it is a theme on which all characters are agreed—and with respect to the grandeur of the actions, and the good effected by them, there could not be found, perhaps, in the whole island a second opinion. It is one of the few, very few subjects, that have yet happened in the world, wherein all men felt alike. It seemed to be the anticipation of a sacred prediction, and one of

the last to be *generally* accomplished—the prophecy that *we shall all be of one mind*.

I would wish to bring the concentrated splendours under your eye; and after a great deal of desultory reading, in the fugitive publications upon the subject, I have not met with any descriptions or remarks which bring the four victories so well into one point of view as the following annexed account,* which appeared

* “VICTORY OF EARL HOWE.—At this period, France had not tried her naval strength against this country since her Revolution; single conflicts between ships were not considered. Proud of her feats on land, she looked upon her marine with equal confidence; she had then ample means for the equipment of a fleet; had chosen men to command her ships of a determined spirit, staunch Republicans, and such enthusiasts in her cause as to take an oath never to strike the national colours. Such were the men which at that time Lord Howe had to contend with. After a partial action on the 29th of May, 1794, on the 1st of June, the French fleet “with their accustomed resolution” (as his Lordship expressed himself,) formed the line, and waited the attack of the British fleet. In two hours the event was decided; thirteen out of twenty-six line of battle ships (*), composing the enemy’s fleet, were dismantled, and seven were taken.—

* Lord Howe only twenty-five.

in one of our evening prints.* I have since understood it was given to that respectable paper by an approved pen.

This defeat they have not forgotten, for the Brest fleet has never since wished to hazard another trial.

“VICTORY OF EARL ST. VINCENT.—The spirit of the navy was augmented since the battle of the first of June; but our enemies were increased, and great disasters had befallen our allies on the Continent. The Spaniards, so recently our friends, were against us. The nation was threatened with invasion, and the Brest fleet was only waiting the junction of the Spanish fleet, consisting of twenty-seven sail of the line, eight of which were of 112 guns. Our force was but fifteen. To prevent a junction seemed to every one impossible; to engage such numbers dangerous; and the junction was pregnant with the most serious consequences to Great Britain. Yet under all these gloomy prospects, this great Admiral, alive to the danger of his country, being informed of their approach, to the astonishment of both fleets, formed a resolution, on viewing the enemy, of that decisive nature, of which great minds only are capable. Four ships were taken, the hostile fleet returned into Cadiz, and has given us no alarms since.

“VICTORY OF VISCOUNT DUNCAN.—We had to encounter the fleet of the power which had ever disputed the pre-eminence of the sea with us; a resolute and formidable people. Alarms for the safety of the country had increased with the confederacy formed to effect our ruin; preparations of the most serious nature only waited an opportunity; we had to

* The General Evening Post.

You will easily believe that the MUSES of the country have not been silent on this *inspiring*

watch a dangerous coast in the worst season of the year, and the nearest to our own shores, for an attack. A most dangerous mutiny had broken out, and the two Admirals' ships were alone free from the contagion, and left unsupported for a time before an enemy's principal port. After a blockade of near five months, our fleet was obliged to quit the Texel; but to the great credit of the naval department, and the unprecedented exertions of the admiral and captains, this fleet was at sea in forty-eight hours, and that of our ancient rival defeated close on his own shores, with the loss of nine sail of the line out of fifteen; and three admirals taken. The discoveries made by the leaders of the rebellion in Ireland have informed us of the danger of the escape of the Dutch fleet in a much stronger point of view than we could at the time have been sensible of.

“VICTORY OF LORD NELSON.—All the powers of Europe have looked with the deepest interest to the result of the meeting of the two fleets; their wishes were well known, and the glorious event has proved that the welfare of the English nation is considered essential almost to their existence.—The consequences to us and to them cannot yet be clearly foreseen. If a vigour should be infused into their councils, the civilized world may hope for peace and tranquillity at last. We have done our part, and will continue to protect the universe from the political and moral depravity of the foe. The mind is lost in contemplating the destruction of a fleet, whose commander conceived his position to bid defiance to *twice* our numbers. It may with justice be

theme—It would have been *unnatural*. An amiable poet and man, the present Laureat, has

added, that the four quarters of the globe will feel the blessings of this splendid victory."

In considering four such achievements, and the respective periods at which they happened, with the consequences had we failed in the first action, it is fair to observe that they are so interwoven and indebted to each other, that in the general transport of admiration and joy at this last laurel to our naval brow, we ought to consider the four as one great link of national glory, obtained, we might almost add, in the West, the South, the North, and the East."

You will receive with this first volume of our correspondence, when I shall have the pleasure of returning it to you in print, which I may now expect in a few posts, the particulars of a fifth triumph of the British Flag no less complete. Indeed, if we take into our idea of it the consequences which *might* have resulted from the enemy accomplishing his object, viz. the reinforcement to the half-smothered rebellion in Ireland, it must be confessed that the victory of Sir JOHN BORLASE WARREN was no less important than that of the illustrious conquerors who preceded him.

There are parallel cases to be found in the history of nations, and some of them wonderfully exact: an instance of which occurs in two epochas, at the period of near forty years distant of each other, the one happening in 1759, the other at the brilliant crisis immediately before us.

Xenophon observes, that if the Athenians, together with the sovereignty of the seas, had enjoyed the advantageous situation of an island, they might with great ease have given

enabled me to give you a *poetical* character of some of the above heroes; and what I remember Dr. Johnson to have said, in a conversation respecting Goldsmith, well applies—

law to their neighbours. For the same fleets which enabled them to ravage the sea-coasts of the Continent at discretion, could equally have protected their own country from the insults of their enemies as long as they maintained their naval superiority. "One would imagine," says the great Montesquieu, "that Xenophon in this passage was speaking of the island of Britain." A writer at that period who celebrated the naval conquests of England, in 1759, observes upon this, that the judicious and glorious exertion of our naval force, under the ministry then established, so strongly confirms Xenophon's remark, that one would imagine their measures were directed, as well as dictated by his consummate genius. We are masters both of those natural and acquired advantages, which Xenophon deemed necessary to make his countrymen invincible. We daily feel their importance more and more, and must be sensible that our liberty, our happiness, and our very existence as a people, depend upon our naval superiority supported by our military virtue, and public spirit. Nothing, humanly speaking, but luxury, effeminacy, and corruption can ever deprive us of this envied superiority. And whatever were the merits of the minister who presided on that day at the admiralty, they could not have tended more to have lifted the country to a greater height of eminence and glory than that it has now gained at a time of much greater difficulty and peril, by the talents, energies, and unwearied exertions of our present First Lord Commissioner—Earl SPENCER.

“ Sir, a great and good man cannot easily be too much praised :”

“ Behold the veteran chief, victorious HOWE,
A faded laurel tear from Gallia's brow ;
On her own shores o'erthrown her naval pride,
Her captur'd ships in Britain's harbours ride.—
From brave CORNWALLIS' sails, in base retreat,
Flies with inglorious speed the num'rous fleet.
Safe in the sheltering port, the timid foe
Eludes of BRIDPORT's arm the threat'ning blow ;
By peril taught with what resistless might,
He knew to hurl the tempest of the fight,
And valiant JARVIS by the Iberian coast
Pours on the faithless foe his scanty host.
Superior squadrons rashly try in vain,
With swarming numbers to usurp the main ;
Strict discipline to skill and courage join'd,
A penetrating eye, and ardent mind,—
Conceive and execute the bold design,—
His thunder break the bold extended line,
And with a dauntless few he bears away
The well-earn'd spoils of Britain's proudest day.

“ What trophies shall the Muse to DUNCAN raise,
Whose worth transcends the boldest flight of praise ?

Will all the powers man's genius can display
Give added lustre to the beams of day?
His virtues shine in native worth array'd,
Nor want, nor ask, precarious Flattery's aid.
Him to his senate Britain's Monarch calls;
His praise resounding from that senate's walls;
Walls where in woven tints pourtray'd are seen
The naval triumph of the Maiden Queen.
The delegated sons of Britain's choice
In his applauses speak a people's voice;
And while from Caledonia's northern skies,
Prolific parent of the brave and wise,
Bursts the full strain in patriot ardour loud
Of such a son with honest vaunting proud,
England asserts her share of DUNCAN's fame,
And claims the hero in Britannia's name.

“Nor, ONSLOW, shall the Muse to thee deny
The warrior's meed, the wreath of victory:
Or, gallant BURGESS, o'er thy trophied bier
Forget to pour the tributary tear.
Nor the less known, though not less valiant train
Who, nobly purging Faction's recent stain,
Rush'd to the watery field at Glory's call,
Unprais'd shall live, nor unlamented fall,—

Ah, gallant race ! by bleeding victory crown'd,
Who, while life's current stream'd from ev'ry wound,
Cried with exulting, though with parting breath,
' Now has our faith been prov'd !' * and smil'd in death.
Nor o'er the tombs of those who nobly died
Hang only pageant plumes of fun'ral pride ;
All ranks unite to aid whom all revere,
And wipe the widow's and the orphan's tear ;
Not opulence the boon alone bestows,
From humbler hearts the stream benignant flows ;
And while the chiefs of Britain's banner'd host
Console the friends of kindred warriors lost.
The meanest soldier of the gen'rous band,
His scantier offering brings with lib'ral hand.

* And the public perfectly agree with the critic that THE HERO OF THE NILE has found in Mr. SOTHEY, judgment to appreciate, and genius to celebrate his exploits. Of this assertion what follows will be a pleasing specimen, and shall crown my own offering, thus strengthened by every auxiliary support. The tribute of an individual, it is true, is lost like the light of a taper amidst the universal radiance of a nation, but to withhold its scanty ray upon that account may as easily be construed into pride as humility : and however I may feel that my powers as a poet are unequal to my subject, there can be nothing humbling attached to the consciousness of my being an Englishman.

“ — NELSON, bleeding on his victor prow,
 Look'd down with pity on his prostrate foe ;
 Rear'd his proud flag a captive navy o'er ;
 And still'd with hymn of praise, the battle's roar.—
 ' ALMIGHTY ! Lord of Hosts ! hear, hear our cry !—
 Thine, GOD of battle ! * thine the victory !'

* Amongst the many things worthy of notice which this illustrious conquest called forth from different minds and memories, it was observed that in the simple and seaman-like letter of the gallant NELSON there was a beautiful coincidence of expression with the conqueror of France, our fifth Henry, after *his* victory :

“ O God ! thy arm was here,
 And not to us, but to *that* arm alone
 Ascribe we ALL.”

It was further remarked, that when John SOBRISKI had completed the conquest of CHOEZIM, in the year 1673, and had delivered VIENNA from its memorable Siege, he sent the standards he had taken, accompanied by a letter, beginning with these words—“ *Je suis rendu. Je vu: DIEU a vaincu.*” SOBRISKI was afterwards chosen, and very deservedly, king of Poland.

How are these virtuous and *elevating* humiliations contrasted by the gasconade even of the truly intrepid BUONAPARTE—
 “ We shall regain,” said he, “ the ships we have lost in Egypt, AT THE PORT OF LONDON !”

As a farther proof of the sensibility of our national gratitude to the naval defenders of our Country, take what follows

“ Bold hero! grac’d by many a noble scar—
Whose arm, unconquer’d, fell in front of war!
NELSON! a nation’s voice thy name shall raise;
Applauding senates consecrate thy praise;
A grateful Monarch twine around thy head
Wreaths that shall deck the wound where Britain bled:
But not a nation’s voice that swells thy name,
Senates that fix, and Kings that crown thy fame;
Nor rescu’d realms aveng’d, confer thy prize;—
A purer source the high reward supplies.
Favour’d of heav’n!—fit instrument, design’d
To stay the pestilence that wastes mankind;
Thy arm, again, on Ham’s astonish’d shore,
Renews the wonders of the days of yore:
O’er Ocean lifts the avenger’s fiery rod,
And smites the spoiler that blasphem’d his God.”

respecting the late Capt. Westcott, who lost his life in the Victory off the Nile. He was a native of Honiton in Devonshire, and as a mark of the high respect in which he was held, and the deep regret for his loss, his Townsmen have universally *gone into mourning*, and have raised a large sum in order to erect a monument.

LETTER XXIII.

CROMER, *Sept.* 12, 1798.

IT is now the prime season here both of the ocean and the land; and as health and happiness can never be long parted, even in this age of separate maintenance, without both being the worse for it, they are, if not found in harmony so often as might be desired, more likely to be conciliated in places where they may receive the breezes of our tutelary Neptune than in any other part of our wave-crowned empire—There, like lovers, they may go hand in hand, or if, lover-like, they should be in quarrel—may kiss and be friends, unmocked of the world. Not that I mean to bring into the account, certain well-bred withering max-

ims, which, though they frequently turn the healthy into sickness, and the sick into their graves, certainly compliment our better sort of folk with the etiquette of dying politely. No, truly, I speak of the charms of Nature in a sea village, as Nature has made them; and—I thank her—as she has made me to feel them;—as they enliven my view, renovate my frame, and invigorate my senses—as they open upon me the wonders and glories of the beautiful universe in the survey of the liquid element, and assist me to enjoy them: in fine, as they inspire all that entered into, and formed the feelings which, with the aid of the Muse, I attempted to delineate in my last.

Albeit, this town is not, as I observed, to be spoken of vauntingly, you are not to conclude from thence that its habitations are hovels, or its accommodations destitute of *comfort*, a word by no means so expletive in England, as it is in many other parts of the world. CROMER, to be sure, compared with some of our high-ton'd watering-places,—such, for instance, as Weymouth, which is made royal; or Bright-

helmstone, which is made princely; and many others on the coasts of Sussex, Kent, &c. &c. which are so be-duked, and be-dutchessed, be-lorded, and be-ladied, that they seem to think they have a *title*—your pardon, for this slip of the pen into a pun—to lift up their heads more proudly even than their waves—compared with these, it must always be low water with my poor Cromer at sea, and low land on shore; but only *figuratively*, and in the eye of *Fashion*; for *naturally*, you will find it all, and much *more* than all, I have described.

There are to be found several dwellings, sufficiently spacious for families, and many that might well content bachelor, or spinster travellers—yea, and with their appropriate attendants, the *petit-chien* of the one, and the *petite-chat* of the other—their characteristic little dog and cat, inclusive—except indeed very old spinsters and bachelors. Those “who libel the fair” assert, that in England my dear countrywomen then begin to have less of the milk of human kindness, and to that acquire more of the gall afloat in their constitution. Yet

even in that *sore* case, I know not where a disappointed and repining spirit can find more room to compose itself than at CROMER. Such a spirit has here continual opportunity of meditating on the fickleness of men and women—of their want of feeling, and of taste. Both in the winds and waves it may perpetually find something analogous to false vows, and the lovers who made them—for that every bachelor has had his heart accepted, and every spinster heard oaths which have been abused, you know, cannot be doubted—and if, in ruminating along by the margin of the main upon these dire wrongs, any elderly gentleman, or gentlewoman *should* be tempted to furnish the world with another example of what has been seen less frequently than the comet—to wit—playing the prank of the young Leander—though not, like him, gaining the beloved by a swim, yet find a cure for perfidiousness, which is the same thing—there cannot, I think, be a spot in the whole world of waters where such a sublime undertaking could be attempted with more assurance of success than from any part of the

very cliff now before me ; nor can it be doubted but that the German ocean—into whose friendly bosom a person, so disposed, might be conveyed by a single jump—would answer the comfortable purpose, to the full as well as the Hellespont. The libellers alluded to above would farther insist, that ancient masters or misses might expect to be received as welcome guests by the brother of Pluto, and *even* by Pluto himself, and that upon more accounts than one. In the first place, they would argue, the Roman soothsayers always offered to Neptune the *gall* of the victims, because in taste it resembles the bitterness of the sea water, and consequently the more bitter the gall the more acceptable ; besides, would they say, ancient single personages are amongst the consecrated things of the *infernal* Jupiter, who is known to have a particular objection to the number *two*—Consequently all the number *ones* would be amongst the auspicious beings sacred to him—so that instead of leading apes in the mythological Erebus, with which they are threatened, the venerable bands will probably be

presented on their first descent into hell with a bouquet of the hallowed cypress; and for ever after occupy the appropriate symbols—the distaff, the spindle, and the scissars, and sit like the *Parcæ* on the right hand of *Proserpine*, the dog *Cerberus* at their feet to guard them from future annoyance, and the *Lethæan* river to enable them to forget past injuries.

I have thus been led with great good humour to throw out friendly hints for an emergency—an affair of life and death—in the mean time all sorts of people resolved upon this world may be very well accommodated.

If you wish your local habitation to the sea, there are pleasant houses standing on the verge of the cliff; and if more inland, you have a choice of dwellings that give you the fragrance of gardens, and the verdure of fields. The dwelling,* for example, in which I am writing

* It is the property of two worthy sisters, of the name of *Cook*, who are at this time in mourning for the last of their parents. They let part of their house to assist in procuring a

to you, should it be unoccupied when you arrive here, might be recommended as enjoying a combination of these *agremens*: it stands in a side direction of the town, has an unobstructed view of lawny hills, and waving corn-fields in front, a slanted prospect of the ocean expands to the right, and to the left a wood, which, though within a few paces of the "watry deep," has neither been stinted of its growth nor damaged in its foliage. I must, however, confess, that in point of advantage, a timber merchant would exclaim, that the trees were too numerous—had been planted too near each other; * it must be owned, also, that, in con-

respectable livelihood; their brother is a heart-sound English sailor, who passes the intervals between his voyages with his sisters, and not only lends a hand to keep all in the Cromer Cabin tight and trim, but when the wind sits contrary and blows hard *in shore*, helps them to weather it. This hint will not be thrown away upon my correspondent or his friends.

* "Cromer-hall is placed in an amphitheatre of woods, which not only shut out all sight of the neighbouring ocean, but seem even to exclude the very idea of its vicinity to that

sequence the vegetation is so interwoven, the verdure would be thought too much in a mass for critics of picturesque beauty: the whole green top is as compact as a colliflower, and has really something of its general shape, and clumpy appearance; the leaves and branches being in a manner stuck together; but had you been here for the two past days, which have been so intensely torrid that the very sea, earth, and air looked overpowered with heat, neither you, nor a Price, a Repton, or a Gilpin—no, nor even the timber-merchant would have wished a single leaf taken from the verdant canopy under which I am just come from taking shelter: and glad was I to find it impenetrable to the beam of that Sun which the night breeze—which is only beginning to respire, while the

boisterous element, whose continual murmurings are so mixed with the rustling of the trees, as scarcely to be distinguished, except when some powerful north-west wind asserts its right of being heard. After a pleasant walk through the grove to the summit of the hill, a most delightful view of the sea and the town of Cromer presents itself."

HISTORY OF NORFOLK.

curfew is tolling — has scarcely attempered. This green asylum belongs to Cromer-Hall, of which it is the defence in front, as a grove that corresponds is a screen behind. Both are the property of a gentleman whose affable manners and liberal disposition have gained him the hearts not of this neighbourhood only, but wheresoever he is known; and Cromer-wood does not afford a more agreeable shade to the rich and prosperous, than Cromer-Hall does a resting place—when its master is resident—to the poor and unfortunate.

The excursions from this place, in every point of the compass—land and sea-ward—whether made on foot, on horse-back, in carriages, or in boats, within the circle of a dozen miles, present somewhat to keep you well amused, and bring you back satisfied, and in good spirits to the point from which you set out.

The particulars, either necessary or pleasant to be known, respecting those places, when disencumbered of the intolerable load, with which the county historians have burthened

them—their enfranchisements, licences, presentations, descents and bequests—may be brought into narrow compass, even as a cup of coles might be taken from a bushel of shells. The scenes and objects which will afford you the most satisfaction in your little tours from this place, and which may be said to form its neighbourhood, will be found at FELBRIGG, SISTED, GUNTON, ALBOROUGH, ANTINGHAM, WALSHAM and CLEY. In accounts of these I perceive the tourists have followed one another: I shall use the liberty of retrenching, compressing, or adding to, as well as own myself indebted to the assistance of all.

Felbrigg, the seat of William Windham, Esq. is by nature one of the most beautiful situations in Norfolk. In the park, which is very extensive, there is more uneven ground than in any other in this county; nor has art been less bountiful; the woods are large and ancient: in the centre of the greatest is an irregular oval of about four acres, surrounded with a broad belt of lofty silver firs; on entering which the eye is enchanted, without at first

perceiving why it is so; probably, from the contrast made by this unvaried green to the diversified tints of the other forest trees, which are every where mixed in the rest of the grove, and which the lofty ever-greens entirely exclude.

From another part of the road an extensive prospect demands attention through a break in the grove, from whence the irregular ground of the park is seen to the greatest advantage: Norwich spire, at about twenty miles distance, terminates the view.

From the upper part of the wood the sea presents itself, but not so strikingly to your eye as from the new plantation, which will in a few years conceal that pleasing object from the eye, but only to display it at another point in awful majesty.

The house which has been considerably enlarged by the Windham family is large and convenient. But the old style of architecture observable in the south front has been happily kept up in the hall, and in the library, which is well furnished with the most valuable authors,

and contains a capital collection of prints from the best masters.

“Mr. Windam’s plantations,” says the author of the Tour of Norfolk, “are designed to answer two purposes, to ornament and belt his park, and to extend his great woodland scene nearer the sea, towards which, at two miles distance it forms a grand bulwark, from whence he looks down an easy declivity, over a bold shore, to an unlimited prospect on the German ocean.”

The general utility of inclosing commons and waste lands has long been a subject of much debate. I have already touched upon it, my dear Baron, in a former part of our correspondence. It is, in truth, too important a part of national improvement to be hastily passed over. Many ingenious and distinguished men have written upon, and encouraged it; amongst others, the Earl of WINCHILSEA and Mr. KENT. The former, with a spirit that combines public œconomy with private benevolence, has tried the good to be derived from this measure on his late waste ground upon his

own estate, and Mr. KENT is a strong advocate for it. The facts stated in his account of the improvement made at Felbrigg, seem to justify his conclusions, he says, "the parish of Felbrigg consists of about thirteen hundred acres of land, and till the year 1771, remained time out of mind in the following state: four hundred acres of inclosed, one hundred of wood-land, four hundred of common-field, and four hundred of common or heath. By authentic registers at different periods, it appeared, that the number of souls had never been known to exceed one hundred and twenty-four; which was the number in 1745; in 1777 they were only one hundred and twenty-one; at this time (1794) they amount to one hundred and seventy-four." This rapid increase Mr. Kent attributes chiefly to the recent improvements made in the parish, by inclosing all the common-field land, and converting most of the common into arable land and plantations. Farther to strengthen his opinion of the benefits of inclosure, Mr. Kent remarks, that the parish of Weyburn,

consisting of about the same quantity of unenclosed common and common-fields, as Felbrigg did, has not increased of late in population.

A still farther light is thrown on the subject by VANCOUVER, in his Survey of a county we shall visit in its turn—I mean Cambridgeshire.

The above diligent and accurate observer, from a due consideration of the information he acquired in the survey of that part of England, has made it clearly evident, that the complete and effectual drainage of one hundred and fifty thousand acres of fen land would produce an additional revenue to the proprietors only, an augmented rent of £.75,000 0 0

That the laying into severalty, or generally enclosing one hundred and thirty-two thousand acres, of open common-field arable land, would yield an additional rent of 52,800 0 0

That a general improvement of the coarse and rough

Carried on. . . . £.127,800 0 0

Brought over....£.127,800 0 0
 pastures, amounting to about
 nineteen thousand eight hun-
 dred acres, would produce an
 increased rent of 9,487 10 0

That the enclosing seven
 thousand five hundred acres of
 highland common, would pro-
 duce, in addition to its present
 estimated value, an increased
 income of 4,125 0 0

That the draining, properly
 improving, and enclosing eight
 thousand acres of fen or moor
 common, would necessarily pro-
 duce an increased rent upon its
 present value of 4,000 0 0

That laying into severalty,
 draining, and improving two
 thousand acres of half yearly
 meadow land, would produce
 an encreased rent of 850 0 0

Carried on....£.146,262 10 0

Total improvement of
which the county is capa-
ble according to the forgo-
ing statements, is £.146,262 10 0

Stating the increased
produce, at thrice the in-
creased rent, hence *per ann.*
to the public £.438,787 10 0

Which at thirty years'
purchase, would increase
the value of the national
capital to the amount of .. £.13,163,625 0 0

It is universally acknowledged, by all writers
on political œconomy, that the population of
a country must ever depend upon the means
which it possesses; and the proper application of
those means for subsisting its inhabitants.
Britain, at this time, unquestionably possesses
the *unemployed* means of subsisting, in addition

to her present numbers, *one third more* of inhabitants; that such an augmentation must be deemed politically right there can be no question; because the internal strength, and productive labour of the nation would be increased. By inviting to early marriage the peasantry of the country, who under their present want of confidence, that their industry will enable them to support an infant offspring, are not allured to the gratification of an early and generous passion, which is, doubtless, of the highest *political* as well as moral consequence. Hence the rapid increase of the inhabitants of North-America, where, by a propagation only, exclusive of the accession of foreigners, their numbers are estimated at *double in twenty-eight years*. That the objects for the employment of the poor would be multiplied, there can be no doubt, when we look at the additional quantity of labour, the country will demand from a *general enclosure*. The fencing, draining, claying, marling, ploughing, sowing, reaping, mowing, threshing, that will then be necessary to attend to; over and above what the business

of the country, at this time, produces, are objects, which, from their employment of the poor, cannot fail creating in the most essential degree, the greatest moral and political advantages; whilst the idle objection, that in the event of a general enclosure, there would be more land thrown into pasture than there ought to be, is too weak and frivolous to deserve attention.

The pursuit of this very momentous subject has made a pause in the picturesque beauty of the village scenery in the environs of Cromer; but you must not call, indeed, I think, you will not feel it, a digression.

The enclosure of a country will very materially assist and add to pictorial beauty. If long tracts of rugged heath-ground, or of barren sand, gapped and encaverned by the burrowing rabbit, with here and there a solitary hut, wild and desolate, and made more sad by the wail of the plover, can be meliorated into cheerful pasturage, bounteous corn fields, flowery hedge-rows, and future groves; if the dreary hut can be replaced by the more comfortable

cottage, and the sweet note of the linnet succeed to the plaint of the pewit, and the cottagers hereby find a screen and a fence, instead of any thing being taken from them, Humanity itself will deliver in a prayer to the Committee of Agriculture, for the enclosure of the comparatively *waste* land of a benevolent country.

Let us return, my Friend, to our village excursions. *SISTED* lies at the back of *FELBRIDGE* Park, and, after turning the overshot wheel of *Gresham-mill*, a little brook, important from events, takes its course through the parish; it then, by its meander, increases the beauty of *Mr. Doughty's Park* at *Hanworth*; from thence again it rises in its claims, by becoming useful to a mill at *Alborough*; at length, after making a pleasing labyrinth, it empties itself into the *Bure* near *Lammas*.

Upon the banks of this little stream—which, though barely covering its gravelly bottom, abounds with trout—are the remains of a once proud edifice, the seat of the *DAMES*: what is most perfect of the foundation appears to have

appertained to a square building with large buttresses, surrounded by a moat, and the rivulet is embanked with a stone wall on one side for at least seventy-five yards from the building. In a few years even these vestiges of its former dignity—for they crumble to the touch—will be hidden even from the antiquary. The name of the manor,—SUSTEAD, late DAMMES—some meagre inscriptions on brass in the church, and the preceding account of the family preserved by Blomfield, are the sole traces of people who once commanded the hat, and the knee of the vassal-neighbourhood. The contemplatist, however, finds an obvious moral in their ruins. If the former Lords fixed their happiness in pageant hospitality, rather than in unostentatious bounty—in pride of ancestry more than mental accomplishments, in the smile of great ones like themselves, rather than in the blessings of the indigent, how would they blush to know, that under the same roof their undistinguished dust lies mixed with the humble ashes of Elizabeth Lowe.

Amidst the unmeaning tribute necessarily

paid to many families in a work of this kind, observe the Compilers of the History of Norfolk—merely because their ancestors had—though, perhaps, undeservedly—obtained favours from our first William*—let the antiquary, or the genealogist, permit us to mention the name of Saint CLAIR, without tracing it back to the reign of Alfred; for though we could, perhaps, gratify them with a long pedigree, as she did not make this her boast, we will only say that Mrs. Elizabeth Lowe was the only daughter of Patrick St. Clair, a respectable clergyman—that she passed the greatest part of her life in the fondest filial attendance on her aged and infirm father—and lest she should be interrupted in these tender duties to her widow'd and bereaved parent, she continued single till

* I must confess I do not myself see the necessity of paying tribute to the undeserving in any work; though I might feel it right, as an Historian, to notice their *lineal* honours or possessions. All the WILLIAMS put together, with all the fortunes that may have pursued their favourites, since the landing of the First, is not a just ground for tribute unsupported by higher pretensions.

after his death, when she married the Rev. Mr. Lowe, Rector of Stukeley, the picturesque village already described.

To give a just idea of the character of this unassumingly good being, it is needless to string the common-place epithets with which monuments are generally loaded; it is enough to say, that those with whom she conversed or corresponded were always pleased or instructed by her wisdom, and that those near whom she lived were made happy by her benevolence.

The house in which she resided, you will perceive, sequestered as was its mistress; it is in the middle of a little farm, which she ornamented with several small plantations. It is now in the occupation of the very ingenious Mr. HUMPHRY REPTON, to whom the Norfolk historians acknowledge themselves obliged for many of the drawings with which their work is embellished; and they *might* have observed further, whose elegant taste in the disposition, as well as ornament of ground, has added to the embellishments of Nature herself.

The church is a small building surrounded

by sycamore trees, over whose tops appears its white round tower: the ground rises agreeably, and presents an engaging view to the north, over an extensive lawn of rich pasture land, intersected by venerable oak, and bounded by a full view of the south front of Felbrigg, boldly relieved by the magnificent wood behind.

GUNTON-HALL, the seat of Lord SUFFIELD, has been greatly enlarged and ornamented with entire new offices under the direction of Mr. WYATT. They are thought to be by far the most complete buildings for the purpose of any thing in the kingdom; they are particularly worthy the attention of strangers, as well for their light elegance, and for conveniency in the apartments, as for a beautiful slate covering, which glitters to the sun-ray like spar: they are formed of small square pieces of slate, each fastened by a screw of wood.

Not far from the house is the parish church, which, by the late Sir William Harbord was taken down and rebuilt, with a magnificent portico of the Doric order; this receives an

additional degree of sanctity from two Druid-looking oaks, which grace its front.

The situation of the house, though on an eminence, is said by connoisseurs, not to have been well chosen. It commands a large piece of water, yet as the ground about it is flat and swampy, this rather chills the sight than improves the prospect.

The quantity of game in the neighbouring plantations, particularly hares and pheasants, is astonishing, and they are preserved with the most rigid attention—to the game laws.

So says Armstrong and Co.; so likewise must your correspondent say, but the latter has something to adjoin. The different sorts of game, are not only injurious to the lands, but almost a nuisance to the public road, along on each side, and over which they run, and fly, in every possible direction — and with so little apparent fear of what awful man, that general alarmer, can do unto them, that the common order of things is reversed: for instead of the man terrifying the birds and beasts of the field, the beasts and the birds terrify the man. The coy

pheasant, and the timid hare forget in a manner their nature, and seem to feel they have *rights and privileges* as well as their masters: at any rate they take their walks and flyings in a sauntering mode, like other *protected* animals; and that so consciously, not to say saucily, in the present instance, that even the Gleaner's horse, who is not easily put out of his way, was somewhat flurried at a brace of hares crossing his path unexpectedly, chacing each other for mere frolic, like a couple of kittens—and really seeming to care no more either for man or horse than if we had been two of the trees in his lordship's plantations; and at the whirl of the first covey of partridges, that without any warning, rose from a sun-bank at an opening about a mile on the Walsford side of Gunton, my poor steed was as much startled as his rider. For the truth of all this—or what is a counterpart of this—every traveller on this road will testify; and it is in many respects seriously inconvenient, but in counterpoise of this evil there is a great deal of good. The noble owners of Gunton-Hall have a large share of public and

private benevolence: the first is shewn in assisting the loyal defenders of their country with ample supplies of blankets, sheets, and other comforts of that kind; and abundant proofs of the latter, in the heart-cheering shapes of wine sent to the sick, money to the industrious, and relief to the deserving poor, according to their several necessities—a benevolence that promises to be hereditary—as Lady LOUISA's cottage rides of charity demonstrate. I leave it to the arithmetic of the mind, my dear Baron, to settle the balance, as to this fondness for the remains of a favourite amusement, the preservation of the game on the Gunton manors, considering these liberalities as a set-off. I have, however, to observe further, in addition to these gracious deeds, that Lord ***** not only employs a number of keepers to drive the game from the estates of his neighbours into his own grounds every evening with springing-spaniels,—to prevent the depredations of the night,—but he under-lets all the farms in his vicinity to hinder the tenantry from feeling themselves aggrieved. Would to heaven, my

friend, all men in power could produce such *per contra's* of good for the injuries which are occasioned to society by their amusements.

I cannot entirely leave Gunton behind us till I mention a particular anecdote respecting it. No less than three families confederated to prevent the enlargement of the property of the manor, namely, the Kemp, Briggs, and a third family, the name of which I have forgot. Each of these had a considerable estate in, or near Gunton, and each had pre-determined not to part with an inch of ground to the Harbords, which is the proper name of the now Suffield family. That power, however, which over-rules human pre-determinations—the pre-determinations, alas! of us poor mole-sighted mortals, who cannot foresee the event of the next second of time—had ordered it otherwise; one of the families died; another was driven to one of the hardest circumstances, to which, in that situation, it could experience in misfortune, viz. the necessity of deriving relief by a mortgage on his estate to these very Harbords; and the third party fell off soon after, by which means, every

inch of ground belonging to the three came into the possession of the family who now inherit. Long, however, before these singular events took place, a very extraordinary expression is said to have fallen from a shrewd old man of the neighbourhood, who happened to be at work in a wood which was then the property of the Brigg's. They—meaning the Harbords—have laid their hands, you see, on the property of my neighbours, said one of the Brigg's, but I fancy they'll never get hold of *mine*: what think you, my friend? My woods look rather in too thriving a condition for that—Hey, what say you, honesty?

I say, quoth the labourer, drily, that to my thinking the trees *lean rather too much towards Guntton*.

The old man's prophecy has been fulfilled. Not a twig but has been conveyed to the Harbords.

At North Walford, you will find a good inn, a good country town, and a much better country.

CLEY is a small sea-port on the northern

coast of Norfolk. Of late years some baths have been erected for invalids, but with little success. It lies about a mile east from Blakeney, and nine from Wells. Blakeney was formerly a very considerable port-town, and much frequented by your German merchants; but Cley does not appear ever to have been of any eminence. Yet inconsiderable as it now is, it is memorable in history upon one account. In the reign of Henry IV. in the year 1406, the eighth of that King, the heir apparent to the crown of Scotland, the son of Robert Bruce, being on a voyage to France, was taken by some seamen belonging to Cley, and carried to the King. He was attended by the earl of Orkney, and was going to France to learn the language. The name of this prince was James. When Henry heard he was taken, he said, laughingly, "My brother of Scotland might as well have sent him to me, for I can speak French." On the royal captive being brought to court, Henry confined both the prince and the earl in the Tower of London, where they remained eighteen years! and so ended his

Majesty of England's joke. Methinks it was carrying it rather too far notwithstanding. But, alas! my Friend, the very jest of a tyrant has often been the destruction of his victim; for however the Panther may sport with his prey, his very amusement is fatal, he suffers it to linger in torture, and at last puts it to death. O what dire examples of this wantonness discolour the rubric History of Power! too many of them must lie bleeding in your memory—and we will fly from the blushing subject to the place where even the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.

On a grave-stone in the church-yard here, you read—"Of your charite pray for the souls of John Symonds, merchant, and Agnes his wife; the which John *decessed* the 14 day of January, the yere of our Lord, M. 5, 8; and the said Agnes *decessed* the last day of May, M. 5, 12."—You will see their portraitures in their winding sheets, and under them those of eight children in brass, and about the stone, brass labels inscribed—"Now Thus."

The labels ~~Now~~ Thus, bear the same

inscription with the motto of Sir Clement Trafford, of Dunton-hall, in Lincolnshire. The occasion of its being taken by the Traffords, is said to be as follows:—In the civil war between Charles I, and his Parliament, the gentleman in possession, siding with the king, was eagerly sought after by the parliament faction, and his life being in danger, he disguised himself in a coat of many patches, and like a common labourer, was found threshing with a flail in the barn; by his motley dress, and giving no answer to his pursuers, who were making inquiries after him,—except Now Thus, Now Thus, at every stroke of the flail,—he was taken for an idiot, and happily escaped. A man in a fool's coat with a flail in his hand, in memory of the above circumstance, is still borne by the Traffords as their crest; and the motto to the arms, is, Now Thus, alluding to the answer made by this ancestor.

In the church-yard is an altar tomb:—In memory of John Greve, an assistant of Sir Cloudesley Shovel, in burning the ships in the port of Tripoli, in Barbary, January 14, 1676,

for his good services made captain of the Orange Tree by King Charles II.

The coast in this neighbourhood has been deemed fortunate in producing many brave seamen and admirals * who have given it celebrity. Between Cley † and Stukey, at Cockthorpe, a village with only three houses in it, were born Sir Cloudesley Shovel, whose monument you will see in Westminster Abbey, as likewise a criticism of its false lustre in the English Spectator,—Sir John Narborough, and Sir Christopher Minns, and at Docking, Sir Edward, afterwards Lord Hawke, justly immortalized in the annals of his country.

A ride in an opposite direction by the sea, through Blakeney, is also a picturesque treasure in reserve for you, and altogether different from any yet mentioned: the road winds into a sequestered valley, shut out from the ocean by a bold uncultivated hill. To the right the grounds

* Our glorious NELSON is also a Norfolk hero.

† CLEY is twelve miles from CROMER, four from HOLT, twenty-five from NORWICH.

shelve from the road into a narrow vale. In this little woody hollow is a village half seen among straggling trees: the steeple is uncommonly in picture; half of it is hid by a rising slope, three fourths of the church obscured by a thicket. The opposite hill rises with magnificence; it presents a large inclosure, under the deep shade of a very noble wood, which to the right overhangs another valley, and is in part lost behind a regular bare hill of a conic form, which rises from the junction of the vales, and almost screens a distant range of rising inclosure. Immediately onward, is a sloping tract of fields, and above them wild rising ground, with a white tower peeping from it. The whole forms one of those pensile, and yet not unpleasing scenes, in which *POUSSIN* delighted; it *would* have been worthy of such a pencil; it is deserving that of our *DE LOUTHERBURG*.

September, 20th.

YOUR returns to *CROMER* from all these places, and a variety of others are in a superior style of beauty. And your revisitation of the beach

and the marine objects, after you have for a few hours embowered yourself in deep vallies, or thick woven woods, or between hills, that shut out the main ocean; and invite only the fresh rivulet, has a peculiar charm. I have experienced this to-day in a similar tour, passing an hour both before I set out and after my return in a beach-walk. In the former period it was low water, and I never saw the beach—you have in mind its being one of the finest on the English coast—so entirely perfect. It was at early morn; not a foot of any kind had impressed it. Some sea-gulls, with their heads nestled under their wings, were reposing on their liquid beds; a small bird,—the water-wag-tail,—was running along the smooth expanse, with steps lighter than those of Camilla over the unbending corn. The fish-boats had not returned with the fortune of the night; one solitary man stood aloof at a projection of the cliff, shrinking as it were from my eyes as they looked up to him, in the degree that most likely I was diminishing from his on looking down upon me. The sun had risen sublimely,

and innumerable little rays from every grain of sand seemed to rejoice while they sparkled in his beams; a sylph-wing'd zephyr presently rose as from the deep, and the scarce perceptible dimpling of the placid water looked as if it marked the place of its ascending from a couch of coral. Its union, however, appeared to gain strength as it winnowed the light surface of the beach; and others, of the breeze-family soon emerged as if in pursuit of the fugitive. The bosom of the sea was softly agitated, as in sympathy; patches of surf were lightly thrown, and left partially on the beach, frothed and bubbled; every bubble of a different colour by the refractions of the sun, and sea, and clouds;—green, yellow, purple, blue, sapphire, crimson, and each of the most exquisite tints—and *they* might be said to tremble to the breeze, which sported about *them*—the latter, however, too light either to injure or remove them; and every bubble was gentl'd, and brighter than the sand-ray. How—how did I sigh for some one whom I loved, to point at this,—for I had never before noticed it how I was, entirely

alone, and to the extent of the horizon for a few minutes, the sea and the shore might be called *my own*. As I glanced my eye along the lawny surface of the beach, a thought with the aërial lightness of yet another of the sylphed train, sprung instantly from my mind, and with a reed I had plucked in the preceding evening's ramble, I wrote what follows,

ON THE SANDS.

Thou emblem of the youthful breast!

Thoughts, fair or foul, may be impress'd

On *thy* smooth face; but not like thee,

Can *youths'* once tainted mind be free,

Nor foul be fair with the next tide,—

The minds' pollution must abide:

Alas! if *that* pure shrine you stain,

Seas cannot wash it white again:

Guardians of Youth, then, O take care!

Th' impressions that YE give, be FAIR.

When I had made these fugitive verses legible, I heard the sound of voices near me, and finding they proceeded from a groupe of bathing ladies, with their attendant nymphs, y'clept waiting-women, and followed by the

salt-water-guides—I had almost said mermaids, for they are amphibious kind of things, living in the Summer almost as much in as out of water—I re-ascended the cliff by a remote flight of steps cut through them, and regained my pleasant abode. In my afternoon walk, when the tide was coming in, I had the curiosity—if you will allow it—the fondness—to revisit as nearly as I could remember, the spot where I had traced the lines. The original, however, was “in the flat sea sunk”—the victim of the waves:—Oh! that they had never destroyed things of more value, or less to be lamented. At the same time, as they were a spontaneous effusion of a passing thought, you will receive the copy my memory has retained, and not be extreme to mark what you may find in them amiss.

LETTER XXIV.

CROMER, *Sept. 22, 1798.*

AT length I receive your packet. Next to the society of a friend there can be nothing so dear as his correspondence. You have given my heart a fresh proof of this; and with all the ardour you have excited in that heart, it thanks you. Ah! how sincerely do I wish, in return for this gratification, that I could reply to all your inquiries satisfactorily. In regard to those which concern the "English Doctor," whom you saw with our party in Holland, and from whom I had my Gleaning of Leyden.*

* *Vide* account of Leyden University, by Dr. Pinckard, *Gleanings*, Vol. II. Letter XLVI. page 308, of the fourth edition.

I have to inform you that the insatiate spirit of war,—which plunders us in such variety of ways, stealing friends, relatives, lovers, and all who are most precious to us, from our arms,—had taken this long-valued treasure from me. He has been employing however his talents for the benefit of his country, by attending our army in his professional appointment of physician. *Suivant la Fortune de Guerre* — he has visited several of the West-India Islands, some of the Colonies of South, many of the states of North-America, and, in the last place, our angry sister-kingdom, Ireland. He has been in occasional communications with me from all these places. He has an eye to observe, and a judgment to discriminate; and were I at liberty to give to you and the Public, his marks and remarks, they would form interesting Gleanings of interesting Situations, and interesting Countries. But, although I cannot do this, I am not without the hope that on some future occasion of greater leisure, he will not continue to think it unbecoming his professional duties to present them to the world.

The prescriptive gravity that in some degree still attaches to all the *liberal* professions in this country, is not a little amusing to persons determined to see men and things as they really are. Such of our younger clergy as would be thought canonical, must be attired not only in their suit of sables, but if not wigged, must have the hair in a school-boy crop to the nape of the neck,—though, this indeed, is now amongst the insignia of our young patriots—or, it must be worn so stiff in buckle, that, if unpowdered,—which is another right patriotic symbol, and we have, I can tell you, our patriot priests and high-priests—it might pass on certain dark heads, for what we call in Britain a black-pudding,—in Italy a polonie, —enwreathed from ear to ear: O Yea, and as they are to become pillars of the church, it is presumed they think it necessary to stand as upright as the pillars of a cloister. It is pretty much the same with our lawyers,—I mean the counsellor part of them.—The flowing locks of many a templar, and the fair redundant curls of many a barrister, are the most unprofessional

articles that *learned gentlemen*,—so are they all technically called,—could enter into a court of justice with. Indeed, were they not forcibly tucked under the tye-wig, before their owner appeared at the bar, they might, perhaps, serve to ground an action of trespass: but should a *learned gentleman* presume to open a matter of any importance thus headed and thus hair'd, there is so little doubt of his losing the cause by the uproar of ridicule that must follow, that I should think the client might come upon him, if not for heavy damages, or for a new trial, at least for return of the fees. I am not sure, whether pleading a writ of *error*, might excuse him to the court without a reprimand from the bench. Then, for our doctors:—alas! youth is in itself an unpardonable fault in an English physician; and while nature continues this impediment, it must *pro tempore* be disguised as much as possible. Why, my dear Baron, a theatrical stripling does not find it more difficult to engraft the old man's beard, and wrinkles, on his unrazor'd lips, and polished brow—in short, to unmake himself,

for some "wither'd winter rogue," like Old Renault in the tragedy, or for some fashionable cripple, like Old Chalkstone in the comedy, than doth a youthful doctor of physic in this island, to fit himself up for the solemnities of the medical character.

Whatever may be the honours of a doctorial head interiorly, not an attenuated hair of the exterior must dare to wander from the wig pharmacopolic, unless disciplined into something of dignity: a pale visage, measured step, and stately deportment, are recommendations at the English medical college, even in the degree that they are objectionable in an English ball-room, and though a fine head of hair is sometimes given by nature to the sons of Æsculapius, they must either tuck it very adroitly up, as one of their surgeons bandage a broken limb, or they must borrow the scissars of one of their apothecaries to amputate it,—for these goddesses of scissars—the fates—and the college, and even the *patients* themselves, will have it so. As if the gloom and ghastly appearances of the unhealthy reflected on the countenance,

and dispiriting the air of the feeling practitioner, were not a sufficient passport to the sick chamber.

I have thrown over this subject a little more sport than it may soberly warrant: but there really is a good deal more attention shewn to the apparatus and trappings of a profession than is necessary; and one is sometimes tempted to think more respect is paid to the shadow than the substance, to the wig, for instance, than to the head it covers, and to the cane, than to the sagacious nose which smells thereat. It is well for your friend, perhaps you will think, that the good doctor who has made the pen thus playful about the paraphernalia of physic, is not, *cane-in-hand*, immediately within hearing!

I do not after all, expect to remove old formalities; all I contend for, is, that there should be no ceremony so absurd as to make it thought indecorous or derogatory to the dignity of the diploma, or the long robe, or the short one, if their wearers appropriate some of the leisure, that more or less happens in the most active employments, either to write, or to publish

what may be written, on topics which are useful to the community, whether professional or not. In truth, had our lawyers, divines, and physicians, inviolably, adhered only to their professional discussions, the country must have been deprived of many of the curious, erudite, and beautiful compositions which now adorn it.

It is with unfeigned pleasure I am able to inform you, that, after visiting so many various parts of the globe, and contending with all the dangers of disease, and of war, our doctorial friend is at length returned among us, and you will believe that I am one of those who hope that he has escaped from all his perils, to resume the professional employment for which he is so eminently qualified in the busy round of London. I do not wonder at your solicitude to know more of the Irish conflict. It occupies the active world; and the friends, and enemies, of England are looking on it with equal vigilance, though from very opposite motives. I trust, you believe, that I feel it too momentous, and too much a part—a *vital* part—of the happiness of this country for me to have neglected it; but I

waited in a kind of dread suspense, in common with tens of thousands more on either side of the Irish channel, for some conclusion of the point at issue ; after which, whatever might be the consequence, I had predetermined to detail the unhappy history of this new family quarrel amongst us, so that the whole might be before you. I joined your anxiety to my own in an appeal to Dr. P. from whom I had received progressive information, while he remained with the army in Ireland ; and having, at length, “ wrung from him his slow leave,” I shall, as promised, now proceed to select and transmit, an original, and I am sure a *faithful* report of this dire civil dissension.

“ I wish,” says the Doctor, in his first letter on this disastrous theme, “ I could give you a more pleasing account of our deeply-troubled sister ; but, unhappily, her name transposed conveys too just an idea of her present state—being, in truth, a sad *Land of Ire*—Inveterate discord threatens her very vitals, and she is in danger of becoming the victim of her own wrath. Rebellion seems to have taken deeper root than was apprehended. It is not only en-

couraged by open, and desperate, example, but supported by a chain of systematic secrecy. Disaffection and treachery are become the order of the day. Many thousands of the deluded people are in arms against the government. In the south, not less than thirty thousand are supposed to have taken the field; and there is strong reason to believe, that still greater numbers only lie concealed till a more favourable moment of declaring themselves. In the towns are crowds of *United Men*, ready to revolt on the first tidings of success. The loyal, and peaceable, subjects cannot be said to pass a night in security, being constantly exposed to the hazard of being murdered in their beds; and their houses, or towns, given up to flames. It is no longer a partial evil. The whole island is convulsed; and order, it is to be feared, will not be restored without the shedding of much blood. It is a contest between property and indigence. Those who seek its cause, only, in political, or religious, grievances are deceived. It is a *domestic* evil; and of such a nature, as to render it highly probable, that it can, only, be removed

by an union of Ireland with England. All other remedies will prove but palliatives. An introduction of commerce, and manufactories, into Ireland, must sooner, or later, be made the radical cure. A spirit of industry, and emulation, unknown among the lower classes of Irish people, is necessary to it becoming a peaceful, happy, and well-ordered state. It is not the idle, dissipated, mob of large towns—not the drunken, vicious, lawless, overflowings of crowded cities ;—it is the sturdy, robust, peasantry—the needy, oppressed, husbandman, who has fled to arms : something must, therefore, be radically bad in the domestic system of the country.”

“ Knowing my enthusiastic veneration for the admired, and highly respected, character of an *English* farmer, you will conceive my surprize, and astonishment, when I found that, in *Ireland*, it was the plough, and the spade, which had been deserted for the pike, and the bayonet :—that the peaceful cultivators of the soil stood foremost in the more than savage project of deluging that soil with human blood. In England

the peasantry are regarded as the firm support of the state—the nation's strong defence:—They are men of independence, virtue, and patriotism:—Sensible of the comforts they enjoy, they feel a common stake in the country, and are ready to defend it:—they form, indeed, that class of men whom it would be most difficult to incite to rebellion.—So widely different is their situation in Ireland, that they, scarcely, appear to be the same order of people. Having no interest in the state, they have no inducement to defend it;—born to poverty, and bred in indolence, their only portion is indigence, and wretchedness. No change can depreciate their lot—*any* they believe may improve it. Scarcely possessing the absolute necessities of life, they have nothing to lose in the contest, and much to hope:—certain of not becoming worse, they seek amendment of their hard fortune in the great scramble of anarchy, disorder, and revolution. Yet it cannot be believed that rebellion can have originated with this class of men. They are but the deluded instruments of artful, wicked, and ambitious

leaders—sunk in the most abject poverty, and in the lowest depth of ignorance, they are the ready dupes of the more crafty, and designing.”

“In every country, be the form of government what it may, there will be men of vicious minds, of desperate fortune, or of disappointed ambition. Restless and dissatisfied, these men regard everything possessing order, or established form, as the fruit of corruption, and oppression : Jealous of those of better fortune, they sedulously seek their ruin, and hesitate at no crime in the attainment of their object. Deluding the ignorant with loud professions of virtue, and patriotism, they conceal their malicious views under the disguise of promoting the public good :—Grant them the change they seek—patriotism instantly expires, and the public good proves only a name. They exalt themselves to the summit—give loose to their despotic passions—and, lording it over the deluded instruments of their ambition, deal out tyranny, and oppression, without reserve. To such men is Ireland indebted for the afflicting calamity

under which she groans. The poor deluded objects who bear the sanguinary pike, know not why they wield it : oppressed with poverty, they are taught that it can only be removed by the destruction of those in power. To gain over the great body of papists, the artful leaders had concealed their designs under the specious pretence of catholic emancipation ;— but as the terms catholic emancipation, and universal suffrage, must be incomprehensible to the majority of these debased, ignorant, beings, the cloven foot has been exposed, and *equality*, with *division* of *property*, being more easily understood, these have been held out as more ready instruments. The poor wretch who holds his acre of land, at an extravagant price, is told that by destroying the government, and those in power, he will become the owner of his morsel ; and be at liberty to plant his potatoe, and feed his pig, without paying tythe to the church, or rent to his landlord.”

“ This, to him, is flattering indeed. It is the consummation of his best wishes. Not aware that his wants would increase, and his masters

be many, he represents to himself the enjoyment of living without labour, and anticipates the sumptuous feast of seasoning his meal of potatoes with the bacon of his own pig. For this he sacrifices his home—deserts his wife and children, or leads them with him to join the bloody standard—and engages in all the perils of civil war.”

“ Nor is it only in the readiness of these unfortunate beings to execute the orders of their leaders in the field, that the strong impression of these delusive promises is exemplified. It is seen, no less, in the refusal of many, who have not, actually, appeared in arms, to pay the rent due to their landlords. Certain of success, they delay not to act upon the principle they have adopted.”

“ The great class of stewards, bailiffs, agents, collectors, and the like, they hold peculiarly obnoxious. Having been represented to them as odious oppressors, they are regarded by the multitude as particular objects of hatred and revenge. It is even perilous for any one to seek, from the tenants, the rent of the land.

Some proprietors, who have been hardy enough to demand it, have met only a positive refusal. Others have been answered with threats. Some have had their houses burnt—their cattle houghed—or received other marks of ill-will. Many of the tenants, not of the poorest order, who have been known to have saved money in order to pay the rent, have availed themselves of these distracted times, and, concealing the money, denied they had any, telling the owner of the land that, if he felt inclined, he might drive home a pig, or take away some hay, or straw, but money they would not pay him. It has, indeed, been made part of the system of the rebels to detain as much specie as possible from circulation, in order the more to distress the country. Such landlords who have been severe, or only thought so; or who have, in any way, rendered themselves obnoxious, have been obliged to fly from their homes, and seek a sanctuary in the towns. So desperate, indeed, are the "*United Men*"—or, as they are more commonly termed—the "*Croppeis*"—and so general the danger to men of property, that many

gentlemen, who usually reside in the country, and have tenants living in the vicinity of their houses, although on the best terms with these tenants, have deemed it prudent not to hazard their lives by passing their nights in the country. They have, therefore, removed their families, and taken lodgings in the towns, abandoning their homes to pillage, in the fear of being murdered in their beds. Many, who are within reach, are in the habit of riding to their estates in the morning, and returning each evening to sleep in town."

"Such are, already, the evil effects of the poisonous doctrine which has been so artfully inculcated for the worst of purposes. Should the extinction of rebellion be the result of the present struggle, it will be long before a due sense of honesty, and justice, resumes its place. Force may compel the rebels to abandon the sanguinary pike; but the moral evil which has assumed the government of their minds will not be easily subdued."

SPEAKING of the situation of the Catholic peasantry, the Doctor thus continues—

Waterford, August, 1798.

* * * * *

“THE very miserable state of the poor renders them the ready instruments of any change. In the south, and west, parts of the island, so extreme is the poverty, and indigence, of the lower classes of the peasantry, that it were difficult to conceive a state more wretched. Not finding employment in commerce, or manufactories, all are obliged to live by agriculture. Speculative men have painted this as the happiest state of society. It is not so in Ireland. Every person being in the necessity of seeking land to cultivate, and the farms being let, as it were, by auction, the rent has become extravagantly

high. This, with the ruinous system of under-letting, which, in Ireland, is sometimes extended to a fourth, or fifth, tenant, leaves the profits to the cultivator so extremely small that, in order to pay the exorbitant rent, he is obliged to subsist upon the bare necessities of life. The catholics, making cleanliness, and comfort, no part of their creed, experienced fewer wants than the protestants, and have been, thereby, enabled to pay a higher price for the land. The protestants not so readily contenting themselves with mere potatoes, filth, and rags, and finding these the hard lot of the peasantry, have abandoned agriculture to the papists, and sought additional comforts, by employing themselves in the linen manufactories of the north. In the south, and west, the lower orders are nearly all catholics. Being ignorant of the English language, and speaking a tongue peculiar to themselves, together with living separate from all other classes of society, civilization has advanced among them with but tardy step. Sunk in extreme ignorance, they are bigots in religion, and the ready dupes of

crafty illiterate priests. Agriculture is their chief pursuit, each becomes a holder of land, although but to the extent of half an acre. The peasants are not separated into the two great classes of farmer and labourer—nor do they assemble in villages, as in England. They live in little mud cabins, distributed about the fields. Each individual has a degree of prejudice, or peculiar gratification, in being a landholder. Farms of one, of two, or of three, acres are abundantly common, and these they are ambitious to take on very long leases, which, not uncommonly, extend to sixty years, a hundred years, three lives, or for ever; which, indeed, is but a species of perpetual mortgage; the purchase-money being allowed to remain upon the estate, instead of being paid into the purse of the vendor, who, in place thereof, receives a certain annual interest. By this plan both parties are accommodated: It is peculiarly convenient to the holder, who could not advance the sum to purchase the land; and the proprietor gratifies his ambition by continuing, to his family, the nominal possession of the estate, and thus extending

his vast domain. These small tenures bear no resemblance to the little cottage gardens of England. They are not the picturesque appendage of a rural cottage home : no trees offer their shade ; no eglantine, woodbine, or rose adds its fragrance—devoid of the green gooseberry-bush—of enlivening flowers, of plants, shrubs, and all the variety of domestic herbs, they form not the pleasing spot of recreation to soothe the evening of the labourer's day : nor do their productions add little comforts to the table, or sweeten, with varied flavor, the owner's scanty meal. They are literally farms—mere estates by which they earn their livelihood—surrounded by a mud bank, or a rough stone wall, they appear the naked fields of naked cabins. If they produce enough of potatoes to furnish food for the family, and feed a pig to pay the landlord, the humble peasant seeks no more. A potatoe-field is his paradise—a mud cabin, and a bundle of straw, his palace, and his couch. A decent house would discomfit him. The varied productions

of a garden he neither wants nor knows—his dear *prhatee*,* the loved apple of the island, is, to him, the richest herb, flower, and fruit. The father, mother, children, and associate pig, all live in the single room of a miserable mud cabin. Potatoes their only food; sour milk, or water, their drink; and dirty straw, strewed on the mud floor, their bed. The only exception respecting the pig is, that instead of spring-water, or butter-milk, he moistens his meal of potatoes with the water that boiled them. He eats in the house, and, like the family, sleeps in the chimney-corner. In this wretched manner, and in these wretched hovels, do the peasants of Ireland drag on a wearisome existence. Their scanty morsel, by furnishing subsistence with little labour, becomes one great cause of that indolence, and laziness, so prevalent among the Irish peasantry. Being able to procure food by the idle cultivation of this limited patch of earth, and it being difficult to obtain more

* The common expression for potatoe.

industrious employment, much of the peasant's time is necessarily unoccupied; and from habits of idleness, he but too readily engages in habits of rebellion."

"The danger of revolution must always exist, so long as the extreme indigence, and poverty, of this great class of the inhabitants remain; and which cannot, probably, be removed while agriculture continues to be the only employment of the poor. Had they further resources in commerce, and manufactories, every man would not be compelled to seek subsistence by tilling the land. Variety of labour holding out to them more of the comforts of life, they would be more strongly incited to industry; the hoe, and the spade, would be forsaken for the shuttle, the mattock, and the oar; and the rent of land, and price of labour, would, necessarily, find a proportioned level. As, therefore, an union with England would introduce commerce, manufactories, and various species of labour, and thereby render more civilized, and industrious, the half-wild possessors of the mountains, and the fields, it is by an *Union* that the present

disposition to rebellion must, eventually, be eradicated. Whether such a step will be proposed by Ireland, or if it were proposed from England, whether it would be accepted by Ireland, is extremely doubtful. From every conversation we hear on the subject I should imagine that *numbers* would be decidedly against it; and it is even probable that *property* would be opposed to it: for, however beneficial it might promise to be to the island in general, it is difficult for individuals, and, particularly those possessed of extensive property, in a country, to reconcile what seems to them the loss of national existence. In our warmest patriotism we are, too often, less solicitous concerning the general good of our country, than desirous for an ambitious display of its name."

"The great property of Ireland is in the hands of a few leading men, who are mostly of the established church, and form but a very small proportion of the inhabitants. The great majority of the people are catholics; and the number of dissenting protestants exceeds that of the national church; hence, in any contest

of parties, the property, being held by so feeble a minority, must be always insecure: but it must be more endangered, than it has hitherto been, before even those who possess it will freely consent to an union: yet if an union be not the result of the present contest, it will, probably, be seen that, on some future occasion, when they are more threatened, and the danger more imminent, and manifest, the great holders of the property of the island will fly into the arms of Britain, and solicit protection in a general consolidation of the empire. It may be then too late. At present it might be effected to the general benefit, and tranquillity, of both countries; and to the particular advantage of Ireland. But the public voice, is, decidedly, against it; and in how far it may be politic to agitate the subject, at this troubled moment, rests in the wisdom of those who are not without the best information whereon to found their judgment."*

* Since the writing of these letters, the great question of the union has been proposed in both houses of parliament, in Great Britain, and Ireland.

August, 1798.

* * * * *

“ THE rebellion would seem first to have assumed its more active form among the pro-

The friends of Union have urged the inconsistency of two distinct legislatures in one empire, contending, that the breath of accident, or a thousand circumstances, which no human foresight, or wisdom, could prevent, might destroy the connexion now existing between the two countries: and by way of example, have instanced the regency—regarding which the two legislatures adopted very opposite principles.

They also contend, that the adjustment of 1782 was to redress existing grievances, without looking to future consequences, or taking a general, and necessary, view of the circumstances: that it was not founded in the solid interests of the country, and hence there could be no reason, whatever, for calling it a *final* adjustment.

They consider the security of the empire not to rest on a firm, and permanent, basis while there remains a possibility of a separate parliament interfering in alliances, and treaties, or of giving different advice to the Sovereign—urging, that the parliament of Ireland might give a vote of peace, neutralize her ports, impede the recruiting of the navy, and army, and thus paralyze the efforts of Great Britain, and endanger the existence of the empire.

testant dissenters of the north; and, as these possess the comforts of life in a higher degree than the people of the other parts of the island, it may, perhaps, be, chiefly, attributed to that restless spirit of republicanism known to reign, so universally, among them. As the flame spread to the south, all the rancour and in-

The Anti-unionists contend, that no parliament has a right to vote away the legislative existence of a country, by incorporating it with any other country.

They object, on account of there being no power which can make the result of the deliberation, for adjusting the reciprocal interests of both Countries, effectual.

They insist, that the arrangement reciprocally acknowledged by the two Countries in 1782, was a *final* adjustment.

They urge, that according to this adjustment, it becomes so powerfully the interest of the one country to draw towards the other, that a severance could only be apprehended from persisting in the attempts to promote an Union.

The house of commons of IRELAND rejected all discussion of the question.

The house of commons of GREAT BRITAIN, unwilling to abandon the subject, formed a series of resolutions expressive of their opinion, and laid them before the crown to be communicated to the parliament of Ireland, when His Majesty, in his wisdom, should see it meet:—and in this suspended state the subject remains at the moment before us,

veteracy of religious persecution were quickly engendered:—politics, and the loud cry of freedom, were lost in bigotry, and superstition. The republican banner, and tree of liberty, were superseded by the crosier and beads, and, profaning the very name of religion, the quarrel, rapidly, degenerated into a contest between chapel and church."

"The crimes, and cruelties, that have been committed are too horrible to be conceived—almost, indeed, to be believed. The annals of history are searched in vain for precedent, or parallel. In former times, those extraordinary acts of horror, which, on relation, so torture the mind, arose from the momentary impulse of raging contest. In Ireland, cruelty and bloodshed are made systematic, and form a leading feature in the plan of the rebellion. Not to think and act with the "United Men," or, "Croppies," has been deemed crime sufficient to call forth the bloody, and avenging, cruelty of these most horrid monsters of human form. At the county town of Wexford, multitudes of innocent men were

thrown into prison, and afterwards dragged from thence through the streets; made a spectacle upon the public bridge; and there tortured with a lingering death, merely for refusing to forsake their families, and follow the rebel standard. The rebels, while slowly, and inhumanly, butchering them with pikes, aggravated their cruelty by insulting their pain, and, before life was well extinguished, tossed their bleeding, mangled, bodies into the river. At Scullabogue, an estate belonging to Mr. King, at the foot of the rough mountain of Carrickburn, upwards of a hundred of the same description of people were made the victims of their savage fury, by being crammed into a barn and burnt alive. Among these were two amiable young ladies of respectable family, and fortune, whose unprovoked murder adds new horrors to the catalogue of rebel-crimes. They were long confined, amidst the crowd of prisoners; and finding no other hope of safety, it is said they offered to marry any of the United Men who would protect their lives, but all were alike insensible to beauty, to tears, and to humanity. Amidst

the loud, and sanguinary cry of "no mercy to the heretics," these unhappy ladies were thrust into the barn, and consumed by the flames. At New Ross, and at other places, great numbers have been destroyed, in a similar manner, by shutting them in their houses, and setting the building on fire. To augment their savage cruelty, these worse than barbarians guarded the doors, exulting in the shrieks and cries of the dying. Did any one of the suffering objects chance to break from the flames, he but escaped to meet a more lingering death, from the destructive pike, of these murderous centinels."

"To such like cruelties have the minds of the deluded wretches, calling themselves "United Men," been incited by the exhortations of the vile leaders who have assumed the title of priests. These blood-thirsty ministers of rebellion teach their ignorant, fanatic, followers, that to murder the heretics is to do service to God; and honour to themselves, and their holy religion. Being offered absolution, and believing that their priests can pardon all their sins, these un-

happy beings strive only which can be foremost in perpetrating the blackest crimes. Some of the merciless, miscreant, leaders, calling themselves priests, have already met the fate justice awards them, and forfeited their lives on a tree, or a gallows;—but that the loss of life might not expiate their crimes, they have persisted in their conduct even at the scaffold. They have insulted the executioner at the very moment of being launched into eternity: even while in the act of fixing the deadly cord, they have cursed him with dreadful imprecations; and, calling down vengeance from above, have sworn to the rebels, in their latest breath, that heaven would aid them in avenging the death of their priests, who fell martyrs to their blessed religion, and their country's good."

"At the battle of Vinegar-hill, it is said that Priest Murphy, taking a handful of musket balls out of his pocket, exhibited them to the rebel multitude, assuring them that each of these balls of lead, had been fired against his body, but that being made invulnerable by the divine spirit of the Blessed Virgin, they fell to the

earth unable to penetrate, or do him harm; adding, "so will it be with you, be of good faith, you are armed against the heretics, they cannot hurt you;" then sprinkling water on the ground, called holy, from having a bloody benediction uttered over it by this sanguinary miscreant, he proclaimed the mountain sacred; vowing to his deluded flock, that such who fought upon it, against the heretics, would, like himself, be invulnerable; and altogether incapable of being injured, or destroyed, of receiving wounds, or death, from the shells, or balls, the sword, or bayonet, of infidels. So firmly had they faith, in the doctrine of their priests, or so excessive was their ignorance, that when shells were first thrown among them, instead of hastening beyond their fatal reach, they collected in crowds, around them, to regard the burning fuse; and, remaining until the moment of explosion, fell, in numbers, the victims of their curiosity, and folly. So great indeed has been their enthusiasm, that, in several actions, they have advanced undaunted to the very cannon-mouth, and it is said, have,

even, been ignorant enough to thrust their wigs into the cannon, in the idea of preventing them from being fired upon their comrades. 'Yet notwithstanding all their faith, and in defiance of all the charms of holy water, of solemn assurances, and priestly vows, not less than ten thousand of these deluded objects have already fallen the sacrifices of their sad superstition, and ignorance. Of troops, we have lost comparatively very few, for the most desperate attack of the rebels has been but the rushing forward of an impetuous, undisciplined, multitude; mostly badly armed, many not armed at all. They have fought with desperation, and had their discipline been equal to their courage, the very inferior bodies of troops that have often defeated them, must have found them irresistible."

"How truly lamentable, that the ardour and enthusiasm, which has actuated them, should not have been directed to a more happy and laudable end! How deplorable that the courage with which they have been inspired, should only have led to the destruction of their country, their kindred, and friends! Alas!

that men should be so much more readily deceived into evil, than persuaded to do good!"

"How oft do the scenes before me, lead me to exclaim, happy, *happy* England! How devoutly do they call forth my earnest prayers, that *her* people may always have wisdom to avert the desolating scourge of civil discord: that they may ever duly estimate the blessings they possess, and continue to maintain a just sense of the dangers of anarchy and rebellion!"

"With what sincere pleasure do I often contemplate your peaceful Gleaning Ramblings, in the different counties of ENGLAND, fearless of pikes and rebels; and needing no warlike escort to protect your path. If I could envy a friend, I must now envy the *English* Gleaner. I behold him mixing in the jocund throng of the village-evening, or view him musing in distant delight at the innocent gambols of a virtuous, and contented, peasantry. At one moment I see him moving in pensive, wandering, step, as I know he is wont, from village to village, and from cottage to cottage; at another I surprize him soliloquizing on the

banks of a rivulet, in the plains, or amidst the mountains. At this instant my fancy paints him noting the vivid idea on the spot, as it rises: At the next, I behold him lost in rapture, or reverie. When I have worked the picture into life, and am about to speak, suddenly the trumpet of war destroys the pleasing illusion, and tears me from tranquillity, and from you. Opposite, and painful ideas, crowd into my mind. It hurries across the channel, and, deserting peaceful cottages, and happy lands, dwells only on fields of blood, and cabins of strife! From happy England, it returns, alas! to afflicted Ireland!"

LETTER XXV.

Sept. 28, 1798.

THE latitude I have given, my loved friend, to the great national subject so ably sketched in the foregoing abstracts of a highly appreciated correspondence, has, necessarily, postponed every other discussion of matters on this more peaceful side of the Irish channel; and the pause has been made most willingly on my part, as well as advantageously on yours. I wished to give you the best information on this great topic, and, I am fully convinced that our unfortunate *home* disputes, in England, or Ireland,—and may Hibernia ever be looked upon and treated as one of the nearest and dearest of our Britannia's family!—

our *domestic* differences, my friend, inspire our foreign foes with much greater confidence of ultimate success, than they can ever hope to derive from all the armies of the Republic. The enemy, indeed, has long since seen and felt that Great Britain can be destroyed only by itself.

“ Oh, England! model to thy inward greatness,
Like little body with a mighty heart;
What might'st thou do, that honour would thee do,
Were all thy children kind and natural!
But see, thy fault France hath in thee found out;—
A NEST OF HOLLOW BOSOMS.”—

The truth of this could not possibly apply more vitally, to the time of the fifth Henry, than to later reigns. But, blessed be God! the nest is not now so crouded as it was. On the contrary, were you at Cromer, while I am yet writing—or indeed, in any other part of England,—you would meet with the *unbought* friends of their country, volunteering her cause,

and preparing for her defence. We have a powerful army of yeomanry, daily appropriating part of their time and property to render themselves as able, as I will not doubt they are willing, to protect their native fields, and to guard their citadel—wherever that citadel may be,—whether on the lofty mountain, or in the humble valley. Men of all fortunes, persuasions and professions, are, in some way or other, zealous and active in preparation. Never have the people of England been so TRIED; never has their *natural love* of the Island,—so FAR AS GOES TO ITS PRESERVATION FROM AN INVADER—been so distinguished,—I will not simply call it *loyalty*,—because,—though I am no advocate for confusion of orders, and know there must be a head as well as hands, and other members; and that, *most* of them are as necessary to the *existence*,—*all* to the sound health, of the body-politic, as to the body-natural,—I consider the present energies as proceeding from those mingled impulses which include our connexions with Prince, People, Husband, Friend, Father, and Countryman,—I will call it then—THE

PATRIOTISM OF THE WHOLE ISLAND IN COMMON
CAUSE ASSEMBLED.

It is on this great principle, that you would observe a glowing spirit displayed in *all* ranks of people, of whatever age or sex. The children, from something more animated than the mere mimicry of their parents, collect the tiny-troop; and sacrificing the usual school-boy pastime—climbing the tree; despoiling the bird's-nest, spinning the top, and driving the hoop,—as well as their supernumerary meals at the pastry and fruit shops,—convert, with earnest attention to military order, most of their holiday sports to serious discipline, while their weekly allowance, and many a visitor's bounty, go to the purchase of their military stores: and every customary toy is now superseded by the flute, the trumpet, the musket, and the drum; while their miniature little sisters and small friends of the same bloomy age, weave the laurel, animate the infant soldiery, and present the Colours.

I had occasion to mention something of this immediately on my regaining this comparatively

happy land, after bidding farewell—a long, but I hope not a last, farewell—to the Continent.* There is something sad, awful, and even afflicting in our last adieus to almost any place, any people, or any person, even if some pain, some injury, and even some displeasure have resulted from our intercourse, provided but *one* affection of a generous, or interesting kind lives in the heart. In a state of separation we cherish the recollection of that one, think of it so often, and in so many different ways, that it seems not to have left room in the memory for any thing less pleasing, less amiable than itself.—But where we have nothing to remember but courtesy and hospitality, such as endear my recollection of you and your Country, the short, but afflicting word *last* prefixed to my farewell would be solemn indeed.

Many have been the threats of invading this small, but superb span of earth, since the hour of my return to it, when the infant battalions

* Introduction to Volume the First, of former Travels.

began to form. Without servilely copying, they even then literally imitated the manly virtue reflected from their fathers. They have since had time to nurse their infant ardours ; what was then a sort of pastime has in many now grown into a principle : and not a few of those who were the senior chieftains of the puerile tribes in those days have shot up into real practical heroes, and already “ done the State some service.”

It is truly gratifying to trace the progress of a national sentiment—to watch its course, from almost a baby sport of armory—a play, as it were, of the *small sword* amongst our striplings,—scarcely amounting to the flourish of drum and trumpet in our theatrical entertainments—thence onward to the study, and the science of arms.—In fine, to the dignified passion of men, who, unsolicited, unrecompensed, but by their feelings, forego the accustomed sweets of ease, and of competence — yield up the habitual attendance on gainful occupations, and at the very time that a great majority might think they had done the duty of good citizens, and

good men, by willing contributions to meet the exigences of their country, in the *hire* of troops, domestic or foreign—and beyond furnishing their quota to which exigences, they cannot be commanded here, even by the chief citizen—stop nothing short of becoming at much cost, and more care, *troops themselves*.

Fervently do I pray—that since your coming amongst us is necessarily postponed to the time mentioned in your last heart-greeted pacquet—yes, my friend, passionately do I supplicate the Fountain of PEACE, that long, very long before that æra shall arrive, this dreadful, though generous preparation for WAR, may be at an end! “and that not only my country, but yours, and every other now bleeding at every pore,”—may be suffered to repose, respire, and replenish. Every prospect that art, or nature can display, in magnificent cities, or bounteous fields: every scene which man may enjoy, or his Maker bestow, is in a manner annihilated by war—and the very sight of a *commercial*, turned into a *military*, nation,—as

is now the case of Great Britain,—while it reflects the image of public virtue, and of patriotism, mingles with it the idea of mutilated life, unnatural deaths, and a groaning world.* May Peace, therefore, be the hand-

* With how much beauty, pathos and energy is this subject enlarged in a pamphlet I have lately perused. The solemn truths conveyed in the following passage, are worth sending to the remotest corner of the earth, at least wherever a musket has been fired, or a bayonet fixed by man against man.

“Of all the punishments and judgments of Providence,” says Dr. Gisbourne, “there is none so terrible and destructive as that of WAR; the horrors of which, indeed, are not at an end even when the contest terminates victoriously. The tenderness of nature, and the integrity of manners which are driven away, are not quickly recovered; but are exchanged for roughness, jealousy, and distrust; and the weeds which grow in the shortest war can hardly be pulled up in a long peace. How soon does the ruthless monster deface all that art and industry has produced?—destroying all plantations—burning churches and palaces, and mingling them in the same ashes with the cottages of the peasant and the labourer. It distinguishes not age or sex, or dignity; but exposes all things and persons—sacred and profane—to the same contempt and confusion; in short, it reduces all that blessed harmony which has been the product of peace and religion, into the chaos it was first in, as if it would contend with the ALMIGHTY in *uncreating* what He has so wonderfully created.

maid of hospitality to hail your arrival on our shore, and may the same blessed power accompany you to the yet crimson border of your own!

Had it, however, been within your power to ante-date your visit—had you the fabled wing of a sylph, or the magic speed of a guardian spirit, and could you transport yourself above the reach of hostile men, or their bloody instruments, from the opposite margin of the main over the German ocean, even to this edge of our English land—could it be done by some ærial flight, or, which would be yet more grateful to me, were we now wreathed arm within arm, in friendship's knot, as oft we have been, in far distant climes—you would have

Are we pleased," asks he, "as forcibly as beautifully, with the enlarged commerce and society of opulent cities, or with the retired pleasures of the country? Do we love stately palaces or noble houses? do we delight in pleasant groves, woods, or fruitful gardens? All these we owe to PEACE—and the dissolution of this Peace, however warrantably entered into, disfigures all this beauty, and in a short time buries all this order and delight in ruin and rubbish."

shared with me—and, indeed, would have but just returned to our temporary little home, from as interesting a sight as a season of general hostility can offer to a man of a peaceful mind, and tender nature.

The yeomanry of this town and vicinity have been drawn up on this most beauteous day, upon a platform screened by a small fort, bordered on one side by the aspiring cliff, opening upon smiling woodlands, and fields in high cultivation; on the other, upon the interminable ocean, with a view of some guard-sloops passing and repassing under your eye, and looking proudly—as they glide along the smooth expanse, in swan-like state, as if conscious they were at once protectors of the land, and sovereigns of the sea—while the liquid space between the cliff and those vessels is relieved by the fishing craft, crowding sail to catch a newborn breeze, and emulously stretching out to sea, no less conscious of protection.

The yeomanry corps here is regulated with

peculiar activity and zeal by a man* of property, unimpeachable in his professional, and estimable in his private character: and if, on the one hand, it is grateful to observe persons of independent fortune resign themselves, in the first instance, to pupilage, so to equip themselves that they may become the instructors and leaders of others, it is no less pleasing to see the subaltern body cheerfully submit themselves to such guidance, and accommodate to the unqualified laws of that passive obedience which military discipline exacts; and without which, indeed, neither army or navy can exist.

Inasmuch as the cause is felt to be just, you would have been pleased to share this; it would have satisfied you to have seen the self-appointed corps duly arranged—gather together at the hour of prayer on the Sabbath, march to the church, and after evening service perform their exercise,

* Mr. PATRIDGE, one of what is called, the King's Council.

and make themselves more adroit and perfect in an art by no means easy to be acquired, and wholly new to most of them; attended too by numerous spectators, chiefly composed of the females, or friends, relatives, and persons in the first and last stages of old men, and children—the intermediate age, and the youth of the district, constitute the regiment; a sight of this kind, you are not, however, to suppose local and circumscribed, but broad and general as the occasion for which the nation is in arms: and with, perhaps, fewer exceptions than at any other period of English history, we may be characterised at this moment by our great English Poet, where he exclaims,

“ They sell the pasture now to buy the horse;
Now all the youth of England are on fire,
And silken dalliance in the wardrobe lies;
Now thrive the armourers, and honour's thought
Reigns solely in the breast of every man.”

Plutarch takes notice of a very remarkable law of Solon's, which declared every man infamous, who, in “ any sedition, or civil dis-

sension in the state, should continue neuter, and refuse to side with either party." Aulus Gellius, who gives a more circumstantial detail of this uncommon law, affirms the penalty to be no less than "confiscation of all the effects, and banishment of the delinquent."

But in this great impulse to protect the island there is no SIDE, NO PARTY.* Every citizen is

* This brings, perhaps to its highest point of possible perfection, what a most singular man, the son of a most singular woman, has stated in a work of as singular excellence, respecting that grandpolitical desideratum, so ably advocated and opposed—a NATIONAL MILITIA. I have already spoken of parallel cases, and quoted one in proof of my assertion. Here is another, where many of the similar points touch so close, they seem but parts of each other, first brought to bear while I am about to transcribe what was written near half a century ago.

"The whole reigns of William the Third and Anne," observes EDWARD WORTLEY MONTAGU, in his 'Reflections on the Rise and Fall of the Antient Republics,' "are distinguished by war abroad, and factions at home. Yet, though we entered into both those wars as principals, the military spirit of our people was not much improved; our national troops composed but a small part of the allied armies, and we placed our chief dependance upon foreign mercenaries.

"Frequent attempts have been made since that time to revive a national disciplined Militia, which have been as

a soldier in theory, and should it be necessary, I have not a fear, that every soldier would, in practice, become a hero.

constantly defeated by ministerial corruption or the malignity of faction. Our *late fears of an invasion*, and the introduction of so large a body of foreign troops, a measure highly unpopular and distasteful, procured at last the long-wished act of a MILITIA. Mutilated as it was, and clogged with almost insuperable difficulties, the real well-wishers to their country were glad to accept it. They looked upon it as a foundation laid for a *much more useful and extensive* Militia, which time and opportunity might enable then to perfect, and which has been perfected, my Friend.

“ Much has been said, and many assertions boldly thrown out as to the utter impracticability of a NATIONAL Militia. But this is either the language of corruption, or of effeminacy, or of cowardice. The Romans, in the first Punick war, found themselves unable to contend with the Carthaginians for want of a marine. Yet that magnanimous people, without any other knowledge of the mechanism of a ship than what they acquired from a galley of their enemies, thrown by accident upon their coasts, without either shipwright or seaman, built, manned, and fitted out a fleet under the Consul Duilius in three months’ time, which engaged and totally defeated the grand fleet of Carthage, though that Republic had enjoyed the sovereignty of the sea unrivalled for time immemorial.

“ This effort of the Roman magnanimity gives a higher idea of the Roman genius, than any other action recorded in their history.

And, although, one rustic waggon loaded from
the FIELD OF PEACE, with a simple oak-bough

And by this alone we must be convinced, "that nothing is insurmountable to the unconquerable hand of liberty, when backed by public virtue, and the generous resolution of a brave and willing people;" continues Montagu. "The difficulties and obstacles in either case, I mean, of making a fleet, or establishing a good militia, will admit of no comparison. The Romans may almost be said to have created a fleet out of nothing. We have nothing more to do then to rouse and diffuse that martial spirit through the nation, which the arts of ministerial policy have so long endeavoured to keep dormant. Great, indeed, has been the outcry of the danger of trusting arms in the dissolute hands of the scum and refuse of the nation in these licentious times. These I consign to the proper severity of the martial discipline of an army; for of this kind of people the bulk of every army in Europe is at this time composed. *I speak to the nobility and gentry, the traders and yeomanry of this kingdom, to all those who are possessed of property, and have something to lose, and, from the interest of their respective shares, are equally concerned in the preservation of the whole.* Of such as these the Roman armies were composed who conquered Italy. Every Roman soldier was a citizen possessed of *property*, and equally interested in the safety of the Republic. The wisdom of the Romans in the choice of their soldiers never appeared in so conspicuous a light as after the defeat at Cannae. Every citizen pressed to take up arms in defence of his country, and not *only refused his pay*, but generously gave up part of what gold and silver he was master of, even to the most trifling ornaments, for the public service.

garland nodding on its centre, and the toil-embrowned peasants seated in gambol, or

The behaviour of the *women* too, to their immortal honour, was equally great and disinterested. Such is the spirit that has been exerted, and continues its exertion, dear Baron, to this present moment, which a truly brave and free people will ever exert in a time of distress and danger. Marius was the first man who broke through that wise maxim, and raised his forces out of the sixth class, which consisted only of the dregs and refuse of the people. Marius too, be it remembered, gave the first stab to the constitution of his country. People of property are not only the chief support, but the best and safest defence of a free and opulent country; and their example will always have a proper influence upon their inferiors.

“Nothing but an extensive militia,” proceeds the author, “can revive the once martial spirit of this nation, and we had even better once more be a nation of soldiers, like our renowned ancestors, than a nation of slaves. Let us not be too much elated, and lulled into a fatal security from some late successes, in which our national forces had no share. Nothing is so common as unexpected vicissitudes in war. Our enemies have many and great resources; and France will never want a plausible pretext for *attempting* to invade the kingdom. Their last attempt answered the proposed end so well, that we may be certain, so politic an enemy, instigated by revenge, will omit no opportunity of playing the same successful engine once more against us.

“No man, I believe, is so weak as to imagine, that France will be deterred from such an attempt by the *danger* which may attend it. For if we reflect upon the number of

stretched in slumber on its fragrant top ;
though, indeed, one weary team, loosened

her troops, the risque of 10, or 20,000 men,—we might lately have said an hundred thousand—can hardly be deemed an object worthy the attention of so formidable a power. For should they *all* perish in the attempt; yet France would be amply repaid by the advantages she would draw from that confusion which they would necessarily occasion. The traitors who lately pointed out the proper times, as well as place for an invasion—how analogous again—and the fatal effects it would have upon public credit, whatever success might attend it, furnishes us with a convincing proof, that France *never loses sight* of so useful a measure. A consideration which greatly inforces the necessity of NATIONAL UNION, and a *national* Militia. The unequalled abilities of one * man “ (humanly speaking) have given a turn to the affairs of Germany, as happy as it was amazing.”

The following brief remarks ought not at this crisis to be omitted.

“ Let us throw but one glance upon the present situation of the once glorious Republics,” adjoins Mr. Montagu, “ and we cannot help reflecting upon the final and direful catastrophe, which will eternally result from the prevalence of ambitious and selfish faction supported by corruption.

“ GREECE, once the nurse of arts and sciences, the fruitful mother of philosophers, lawgivers, and heroes, now lies prostrate under the iron yoke of ignorance and barbarism.—Carthage, once the mighty sovereign of the ocean, and the

* Two, the Arch-Duke and Russian general has given the present turn.

from the plough,—heavily moving along to the accustomed manger—with a single labourer, flung carelessly across the fore-horse, or idly placed, in side-saddle fashion upon his back, as he returns to the noon-tide meal, and sings, or whistles, the unspell'd, untun'd ditty, by the way;—though these are more cheering to the eye, more comforting to the mind, and convey to both a more gracious assemblage of thoughts and feelings, than the best ordered arrangements of accoutered men, and caparison'd steeds, in the FIELD OF WAR,—in truth, than the Car

centre of universal commerce, which poured the riches of the nations into her lap, now puzzles the inquisitive traveller, in his researches after even the *vestiges* of her ruins.—And ROME, the mistress of the universe, which once contained whatever was esteemed great or brilliant in human nature, is now sunk into the ignoble seat of whatever is esteemed mean and infamous. Another fate has, you know, *lately* attended her, and yet another at *this instant* which may possibly bring her back, under her Italian disguise, to her former soft insignificance.

“Should faction again predominate, and succeed in its destructive views, and the dastardly maxims of luxury and effeminacy universally prevail amongst us—such too will soon be the fate of BRITAIN.”

of Victory, or the Victor himself, in the fulness of triumph—his crown of laurel, songs of conquest, with all the Muse's classic allusions and proud comparisons to deathless names—or even than the long trains of a vanquished army—with all its treasure, its captive heroes, princes, or kings;—yet the view of a whole country, putting on the ARMOUR of PATRIOTISM, on one great, pure, and pious principle, concerning which, even those who continue to lift up the dissenting voice, against whatever *else* regards the origin and progress of the war, are unanimous;—the preservation of their natal earth from an INVADER,—is, unquestionably, virtuous in the motive, august in the plan, and glorious in the execution.* Every English city, from

* Probably, there has never been yet concentrated and brought under one point of view, in a light so gratifying, or that can so well illustrate this subject to your mind's eye, at this distance from the original scene, as a sketch of what has been exhibited to the British Public, while some of the last Letters of our correspondence have been printing off,—so late, indeed, as the fourth of the preceding month, June 1799,—three quarters of a year after the date of my describing at Cromer, *detached parts* of what may now be contem-

the smallest to the vast metropolis, and every town, from Cromer to the poorest display of

plated, as a *brilliant whole*. And that you may have it in the best style, I will give it in the *thoughts* of the nervous writer, I have already made you confess yourself obliged, for a splendid morsel in my twelfth Letter; and you shall have those thoughts in the English dress, wherein that Author's liberal Translator has so gracefully arrayed them.

There are few sights so interesting, grand, and surprizing to a foreigner, as that which the King of England's birth-day presented. This annual celebration, became on Tuesday last, a kind of national solemnity, and every thing conspired to heighten its lustre—the delight felt by the King, the Queen, and their fine family, the present general security, the late victories, the picture of public prosperity, the military nature of the ceremony, and the immense concourse and happy spirit of the people that attended.

Seventy detachments of Volunteer Armed Associations, which had been formed *within a year* only, in the parishes of London and its precincts, were assembled about five o'clock in the morning, in Hyde Park, to the number of 8193 men, of which 841 were cavalry. The brilliant appearance of the different corps, their activity, their neatness, the exactness of their manœuvres, the beauty of the horses, the rich elegance of the Colours, and the satisfaction beaming from every countenance, gave life, and grace, and combination to the scene.

At nine o'clock, the report of a cannon announced the arrival of the King, who was accompanied by the Prince of *Wales*, the Dukes of *York*, *Kent*, *Cumberland*, and *Gloucester*, and a retinue of general officers. The King rode along the whole line, the music playing *GOD SAVE THE KING*; after

village - architecture—from the well - sheltered family habitation of Mr. PARTRIDGE, to the

which, at the discharge of a cannon, the firing commenced, each corps firing a distinct volley; after three rounds had been fired, the whole line gave three cheers, waving their helmets in the air, and the musick again struck up GOD SAVE THE KING. The line then marched in companies before His Majesty.

The windows, balconies, and tops of the neighbouring houses, and all the trees of the Park, were crouded with people: round the line at some distance stood an innumerable multitude: the charge of keeping order on the ground, which was given to some of the Yeomanry Cavalry of the London Volunteers, was exercised without harshness, dispute, or the least confusion; thanks to that popular spirit of order, peace, and method, my Friend, which here prevent those disturbances, severities, and accidents, that in other places almost always sully festivities of this kind. No impatience broke out among the croud, but an instinctive and general respect was shewn to order.

The Chief Magistrate and Soldier of the Empire received this day, the sincerest and most brilliant testimony of public affection, which was displayed in unanimous demonstrations; and made amends for whatever anxiety and affliction, junctures less serene, might have created in his bosom a few years since; it has left on every heart a glow of gratitude to the Almighty hand, which, in the midst of the general calamities and discord of Europe, has in ENGLAND blessed with security the saving power of the Constitution, and that moral harmony existing between a free nation and a Prince, who must be proud to feel HIMSELF governed by the laws of a HAPPY LAND.

undefended huts upon the cliff—partake the principle, assist the design, and contribute to the accomplishment.

Drawing then our inference from a great scriptural maxim, that—"A HOUSE DIVIDED AGAINST ITSELF SHALL NOT STAND"—while we admit—and it is indisputable—the full force of this sacred truth, is it not fair to conclude—that the *inversion* of the axiom must be no less certain—A HOUSE DETERMINED TO UNITE CANNOT FALL? To the *House of England* it is, perhaps, only necessary to be unanimous in any *one great point*—and whatever difference of opinion there may be in the family which inhabit it, as to reforms and repairs of particular parts—their agreement on that one—as in the case of INVASION,—may save the whole building.



London, July 4, 1799.

WHAT a gap is here to be filled up! what a jump has been made in our dates! the leap almost of a year. You will permit me to explain.

I perceive by the accumulated bulk of that part of our correspondence now before me in print,—as the sheets have been brought from the press,—that a Volume is filled to more than the usual complement of pages—and *quantity* must, in the second place, be regarded in whatever we presume to offer the public. I am aware that little progress has yet been made on a *scale of miles*, not so, I trust, in the measurement which will be taken by the mind's

eye, in the point to which it has been the chief intention to direct it. What that point is, has been stated and exemplified in so many forms and on so many occasions, in the course of these Letters, that it would be mere reiteration, not only to you, my friend, to whom they were originally addressed, but to the public, of which you deem them worthy, to enlarge. And though I am satisfied very many national subjects of great pith and moment, respecting the POLITICS, the MORALS, the GENIUS, the SCIENCE, the PROFESSIONAL CHARACTER, and the CHARITIES* of the Country—with the due shadings, and in some cases, the dark contrasts of these—our factions, corruptions—stretches of power—strains of privilege—with diverse abuses, and various quackeries—empiricisms both of body and soul—with displays of our towns and cities of nobler note—including that *most* noble, *most* august—the

* On this benevolent theme—one of the prime glories of the nation—I am permitted to promise you new and rich stores.

nation's just pride—the admiration, and at the present moment, the envy of almost the whole world—our SUBLIME METROPOLIS—though, I am fully sensible that remarks on *these*, and numberless *other* objects, form the remaining parts of the correspondence I have had the pleasure to hold with you—between the dates of my first Letter of the first of May, 1798, to that which I am now writing to you on the fourth of July, 1799,—with sketches of the diversified scenery, anecdote, character, and whatever art or nature,* had to offer by the way, in our traverse of many parts of a country which will justify all I have said of it—yet they must unavoidably stand over to a more distant period.

Alas! *distant* period! “proud words and vain,” as our sublime but mournful Poet of the Night†—would call them—

“Poor pensioners on the bounties of an hour”

* Among these, I am proud to know, you and many of our friends, solicit a place for the magical SYBIL LEAVES, blown into my path by a Fairy—and for the NATIVE SONNETS, &c.

† Dr. YOUNG.

as we are, how do we reckon upon time—the least certain, perhaps, of any thing in an uncertain world?

Your friend, Baron, has been much out of health, for many weeks past, and from some afflictive feelings, his mind has suffered with his body, or possibly by their proximity, instead of relieving, as such near relatives should, have aggrieved each other. This must at once offer an explanation to you of his late unusually-extended silence, and give another reason for wishing to come to a pause in the correspondence.—He is neither dispirited nor superstitious, and will not therefore think it

“An awful pause prophetic of its *end* ;”

but, without bringing himself, individually, at all into the subject, observe—that this appears to be the crisis at which every man in the realm of England should *endeavour* to do something that he but *thinks* may be useful to the public. The *mite* of the widow was an acceptable offering even in the Eye of God—that which your friend here offers his country, on the like pure

principle of affection, will not be rejected: and as the smallest gift should not be delayed, he confesses, that it will be to him like securing a ray of satisfaction—which no event can wholly destroy—to know that his tribute is placed beyond the mercy of accident or the reach of death itself.

To you, my friend, the delay of what is intended at the first opportunity, should it never present itself—though perhaps it may speedily—can be no disappointment; were the whole of the correspondence now before you, what could it more than give you back in print what you have already read in manuscript? except, indeed, what casual information may since have been added in the notes of reference, the result of farther research and reflection, as in the present Volume?

Mean time, I cannot but lament that the time of your proposed journey and voyage are postponed to a date yet more remote. The motive of your delay is honourable to you; but the heart is often afflicted by what it approves—a little selfishly perhaps, but very

sincerely—mine, I must own, feels in the present instance the sickness of *Hope deferred*. That, however, is a malady, which, alas! we must all feel by turns; but still it is preferable to no *Hope at all*; despair being the only incurable disease of the soul! And the *idea*—even should it at length prove only such—that, at such a point of time we shall be reunited to those we love—that we shall see—converse with, and embrace them—is worth cherishing—fondly cherishing—though the intermediate space should be long, dreary, and unjoyous.

But, in *your* case, the absence of a friend, is,—I will not say atoned—mitigated and consoled. While Heaven permits you to be encompassed, as now it doth, by so many of its distinguished blessings; a lovely partner, a beautiful family, competent fortunes, uninterrupted health, and now the prospect,—clear of the clouds and darkness that lately rested upon it,—of the deliverance of *your* country also from an Invader,—indeed, of two countries,—your native Switzerland and almost naturalized Ger-

many;—while such beatitudes cluster about you—such guests—I had well nigh called them angel-guests,—emparadise your bower, and grace your roof, it would be to repeat the fault by which, we are told, man first *fell* from an *almost* angelic state, to repine.

—Yet, shall I confess, that while I can thus reason and thus feel, the truth, the force, of that reasoning, I peruse, and re-peruse, that passage of your last, which expresses—with every fervour and mark of truth—your solicitude, your pain at the necessity of being longer detained. Without being thought to encourage the repining spirit, shall I dare even to acknowledge, that those expressions were, and still remain, the most in favour with my selfish heart? The fact—and whatever of fault there may be in it—cannot be denied. Yet, I fear the confession is not made with all the penitence which the holy fathers might require: for, I cannot truly say the solicitude, or,—pardon me,—even the pain it brings—is altogether unwelcome to me; though, I would have no more pain inflicted, Baron, than—while you

are grateful for the abundant good you enjoy at home—to feel that your felicity would be more *complete*, were the society of your far-distant Correspondent added unto you.

“ The head and front of my offending
Hath this extent,—no more.”

and this, I know, you will forgive. You are a friend, not a confessor: yet, even in the former indulgent character, I ought, methinks, to offer you all the palliatives I can: and one, of no slight consideration, is at hand. I have of late more than usual stood in need of the *lenitives* of affection; for, besides, mere derangement of health, I have been suffering, and very heavily, from its *corrosives*. A man, whom you honour with your affection, has been for some time conflicting with himself from a threatened act of oppression; under a generous and indignant sense of which, he wrote what a firm though agitated mind dictated. I mention it to you now, because the wound is in a great measure cured by the remedy, and you are not now to condole but to gratulate.

“ Let the unfortunate,” says one of the best historians of our England,* and one of the most acute observers of general nature : “ let the Unhappy turn to the works of the philosophers and moralists ; to the noble effusions of intellectual beings ; there, when all else fails, may a spring of comfort be found, where Adversity cannot prevent us from slaking our thirst.” The medicine is good ; but, when the sick or hurt mind can “ minister to its own disease” without resorting to *distant* reservoirs for the restorative ; when the mental invalid can repair to a fountain, much nearer home—when he can draw the cordial from his *own breast*, the draught is yet more healing, more anodyne and more natural. The sufferer to whom I allude, has had recourse to these *living* waters : and—on the chance of extending the healing power to others—they shall terminate these our FIRST VIEWS OF ENGLAND,—not, however, as tears in an urn,—but as a conquest-marking inscription on a

* HUME.

TRIUMPHAL ARCH, sacred to the proudest
victory of mortal man—a *victory of the Mind.*

S O N N E T.

SPARK OF THE ETERNAL FIRE! whose lambent ray,

Quenches the lustre of yon flaming Ball,
And ev'ry orb to which he lends the day,
Shrinks to the taper's gleam—on THEE I call!

On thee, my SOUL! who, though thyself unseen,
Within my breast hast fix'd a radiant throne,
Whereon thou sit'st, in majesty serene
Ev'n like thy GOD, superior and alone!

And should that breast, from Freedom's arms be torn,
Be hurl'd to cavern'd cells, or dungeon gloom,
Instinct with THEE, and by thy power upborn,
A GLORY would illume my living tomb:

For O, to thee, SPIRIT divine! is giv'n,
WIDE AS THE TYRANT'S HELL,—TO SPREAD THE
LIGHT OF HEAV'N.

F I N I S.

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